BRITANNIA and EVE

Christmas Number

DECEMBER, 1953

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BRITANNIA and EVE

VOL. 47 No. 6 DECEMBER, 1953

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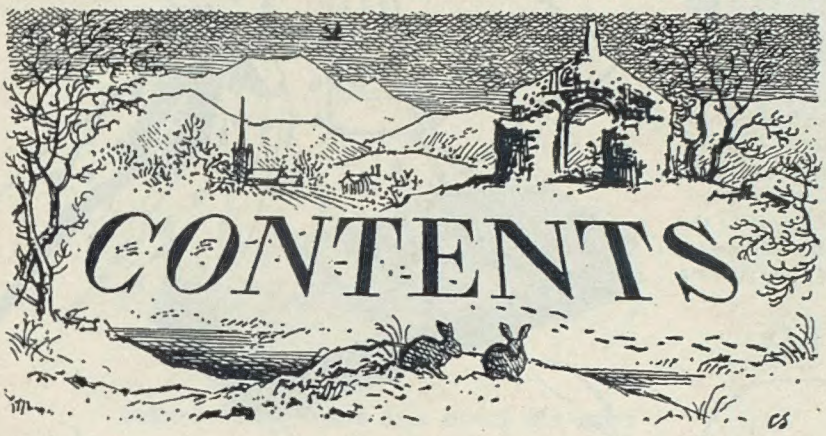

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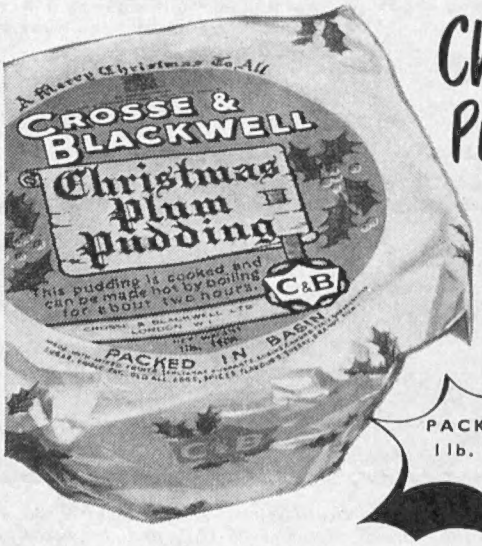
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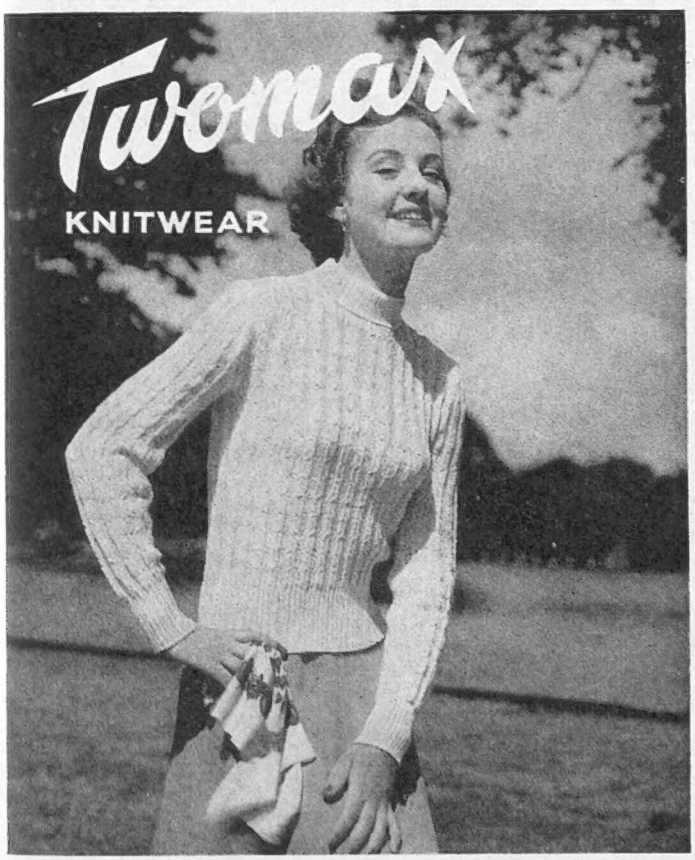

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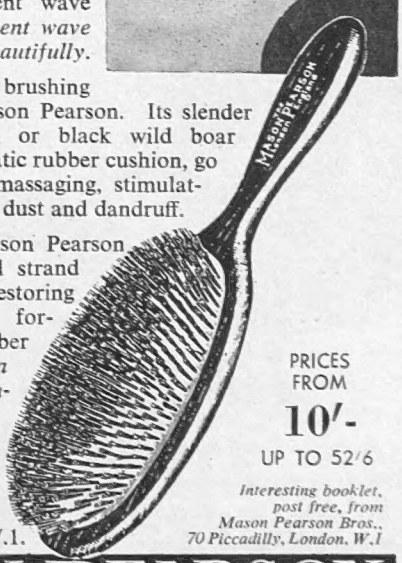

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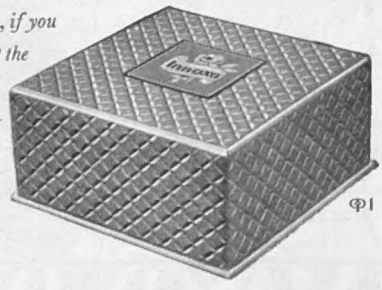

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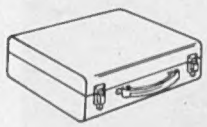

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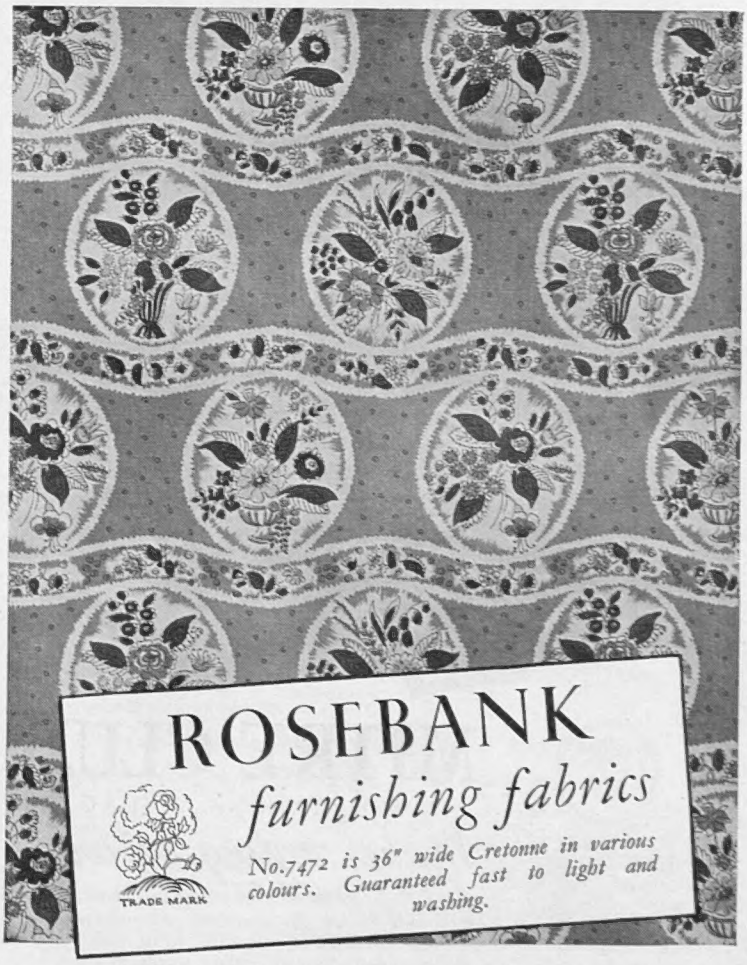

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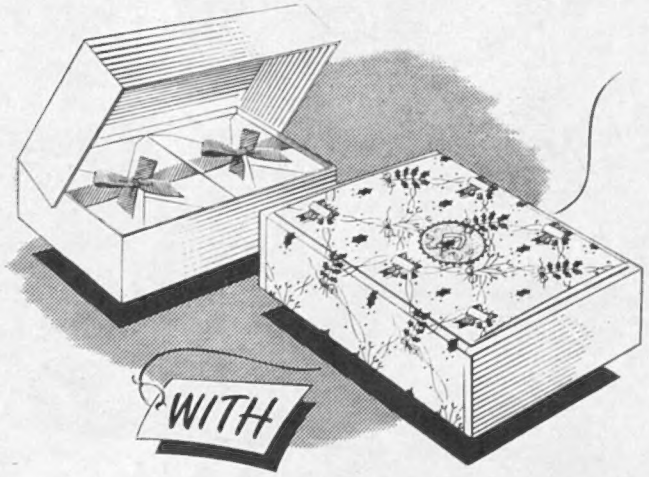

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Legend of OSTERHAUSEN

By

E. C. HORNSBY

Illustrations by D. L. MAYS

MANY years ago when the world was a quieter place, I went to the Bavarian Alps for reasons of health.

Climbing was out of the question, but in one of the valleys I came upon the little village of Osterhausen nestling hard against a spur of the foothills, and there I spent many months, the memory of which to-day is like one of those coloured pictures seen in a fairy-story book when one was a child.

I was received into the life of the village, which in those days still had its little colony of wood-carvers; and all day one heard the round "tap-tap-tap," as though giant woodpeckers were busy in the forests about.

My constant companion was the pastor, Ludvig Enger. I went with him on his rounds and we walked many miles in conversation or in no less friendly silence through the deep, hushed greenery of the forests above us, cloudlike into the skies.

I never knew a man less noticeable at first sight than Enger and yet now more easy to remember; even at this moment I see him clearly, with his brown face and his vividly blue eyes. He wore what we then called a Norfolk jacket, knickerbockers that buttoned below the knee, thick stockings and heavily studded boots, and was never without his stout walking-stick. He looked more a farmer than a pastor. I often

In the glimpse I had over the pastor's shoulder I thought I saw a number of people seated there before us

thought that Simon and Andrew, who were called straight from their nets to become " fishers of men," must have been just that same loyal, simple, forthright type.

One day we got on to the question of miracles, and I advanced the opinion that many of the so-called miracles were capable of explanation in the light of modern knowledge. I instanced the many incidents of people cured of nervous disorders and suggested they illustrated hypnotic powers. I did not do it in any attempt to drive a flaw in his faith ; rather his faith was so strong I sought its support to cast out my own doubts. Finally, I asked him directly :

" You believe in miracles, then ? " I said.

" I believe in God," he answered simply ; " and believing in the miracle of God I also believe He is capable of things beyond our understanding and, moreover, which it is not necessary for us to understand. Besides——"

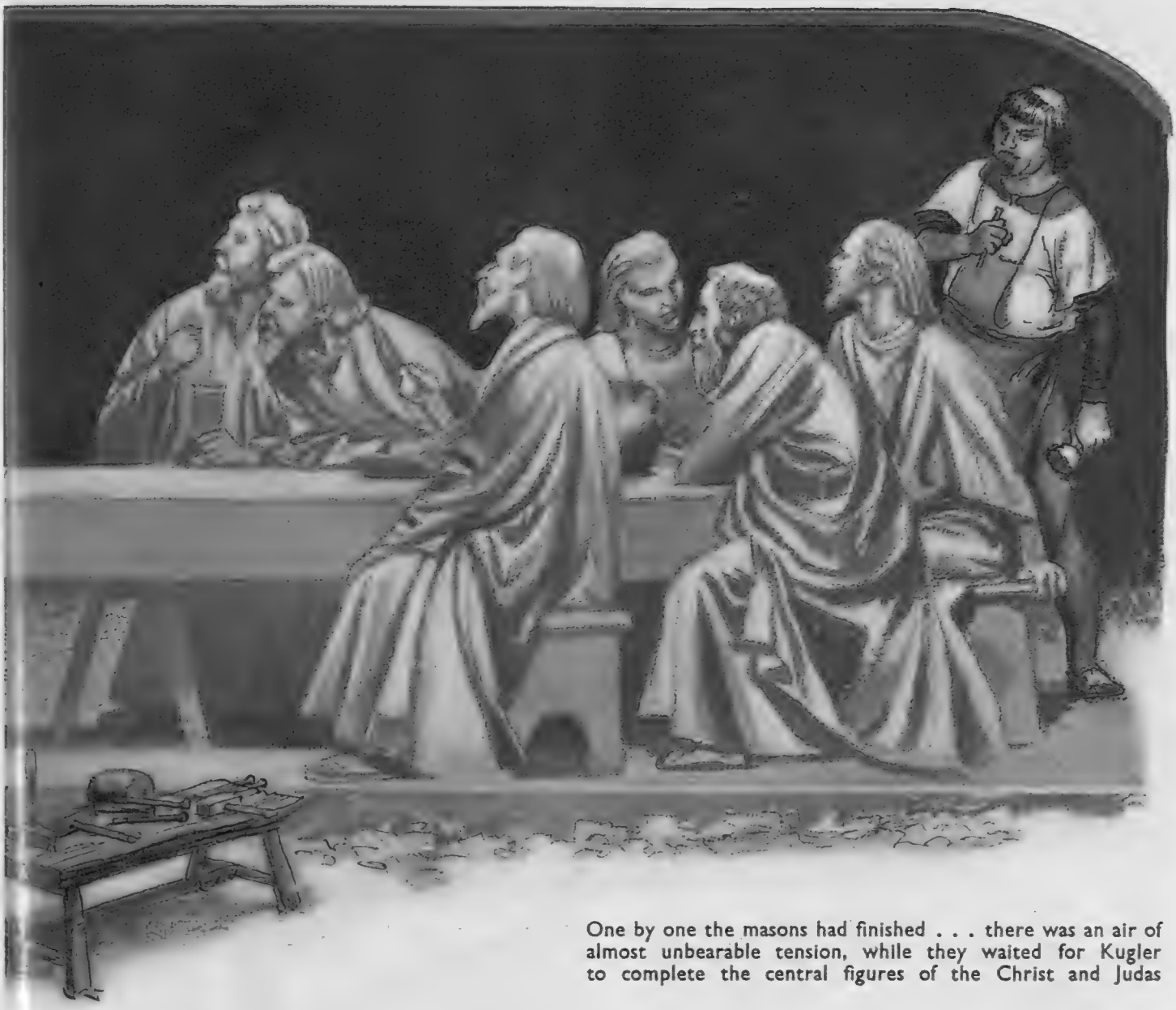
He broke off and we went on in silence for a while.

" Come to the church to-night," he said presently. " I have something to show you of interest." Then easily and quietly he directed the talk into other channels.

The little church was built hard against the vertical side of the foothill so that the face of the rock must have been trimmed back to receive it. This meant that there was a plain wall above the altar instead of the usual window. The whole church was plain to the point of austerity except that each of the families of woodcarvers by tradition enriched the pews they occupied generation by generation each in their turn with a specimen of their craft so that they became a family memorial both to skill and to devotion.

AFTER the simple service I waited for the pastor to remove his vestments and, in the comfort of his Norfolk jacket and knickerbockers again, he took me to a door by the side of the altar. It was heavy, and the wrought door furniture was itself of great beauty and interest. He opened the door on to a short vestibule and, taking from the wall a pine torch placed handily, he lit it, and I followed its backward bending flame into the chamber beyond.

It was a cave-like place cut out of the solid hillside, and for a moment in the glimpse I caught over the pastor's shoulder



One by one the masons had finished . . . there was an air of almost unbearable tension, while they waited for Kugler to complete the central figures of the Christ and Judas

by the wavering torchlight, I thought there were a number of people seated before us.

Then the torch burnt more steadily, and I saw it was a life-size reproduction in stone of the Last Supper.

One might have expected to see something of the sort in one of the great cathedrals of the Catholic countries, but I was surprised to see such a thing there, especially contrasting it with the plain little church outside. The pastor must have sensed my thoughts, for he answered them.

" This was placed here a long while ago," he said, " before Luther had taught us to worship God simply and with simple hearts. In those days the art of Osterhausen was not wood-carving, but stonemasonry. The stone hereabouts has special beauty, free from flaw and easily worked. It was the age when cathedrals were springing up all over Europe and statues fashioned here went to all of them.

" This place itself was one of the workings, and when they had stripped out all the workable stone they decided to build the church in front of it and this inner cave was used to house a supreme example of their skill. Look closer and I think you will agree they had cause to be proud of it."

I took the torch and went along the line of sitting figures one by one. In the case of the eleven disciples I could see great technical skill had been shown; each man was a recognisable type, and if the dumb stone had had a tongue it could not have spoken plainer of what sort of man he was. As the torch moved, one could almost fancy the row of heads turning with it.

" Each family of stonemasons—and there were thirteen of them," explained the pastor behind me, " kept to one particular apostle. An early type of mass production, shall we say. You must understand these were not great sculptors intent on producing a masterpiece each time; they were artisans content to reproduce the figures that stand everywhere outside the great cathedrals. They learnt to do the one particular figure allotted to them, and chipped them out by the dozen. They used local types as models; one can still trace family likenesses in our congregation to-day."

I could well believe it; I had stopped before one figure with a sense of recognition, and now, as the torch shone on my companion's face the likeness was unmistakable.

" Look at the two central figures," said Enger's deep voice.

I did, and caught my breath. Beyond the light Enger nodded his head gravely.

The others may have been skilful; these figures went beyond; they were indeed masterpieces.

I cannot expect to convey in words the dignity, the compassion, the nobility and sorrow depicted in the face of the betrayed Christ as he sat looking at his betrayer. It was suffering translated by a master touch into supreme beauty. I said something of the sort haltingly to the pastor, for I was much moved.

"HAVE you not noticed," he said, " how often beauty is inseparable from that feeling of sadness? The young beauty of a spring day; the quiet eventide of autumn; the grace of a child's arm clasped about its mother's neck; have not all these things knocked at your heart with the double stroke of beauty and sorrow so that you have seen them through your tears?"

He lowered the torch a little. In front of the table crouching was the Judas, the very type of all Judases of all ages and nationalities; of all whosoever have betrayed God or their fellowmen.

One could not even hate him. He was so obviously born to betray; false as a bell cracked in the casting. There he crouched in the dirt, with his pitiful bag of money beside him. It was as though a ray from the compassionate eyes of the

One seated at the table struck from that paltry, crouching figure and shone into one's own soul, revealing the flaws hidden there so that condemnation died unspoken.

"There is a story connected with this—a legend perhaps would be more correct," said Enger. "Come to the porch and I will tell it you."

We sat on a bench outside the little church beneath the porch with its carved heads. Above us the setting sun was turning the distant peaks into rose and gold, in the meadows a cow-bell tinkled, and in the fragrant companionship of our pipes Enger told me the story of the Last Supper of Osterhausen.

* * *

At the time the village had not been hereabouts at all, but further up the valley, where it stood until overwhelmed by an avalanche some hundred years or more ago. Here was where the quarry had been and the then church was a little wooden affair almost toppling into its own reflection in the lake below.

There had been a Pastor Johann Rosseger in those days, a man of ambition evidently, eager for a larger, more permanent place of worship. It was his suggestion when the working was exhausted to have it cleaned out, faced up true, and a church built out from it. There was plenty of stone about, not large enough for statuary, which could be used for the purpose, and no lack of skilled and willing hands.

BUT it was among the stonemasons themselves that the idea grew of creating a life-size tableau of the Last Supper and setting it up in the chamber from which so much of their stone had come.

Each master craftsman of them undertook his own particular apostle, and, as usual, the fashioning of the Christ fell to the lot of the head one of them, old Hans Werner. The lot of Judas fell, as always, to the Kugler family.

Old Emanuel Kugler had recently died, and the head of the family now was his son, Julius, and there was much shaking of heads over him; not that he was not a skilled worker—old Emanuel had seen to that—but he was weak as water, feckless as the wind and had stayed at work during his father's lifetime only for fear of the old man's stout belt.

However, a creature of shallow enthusiasms, Julius was only too eager to establish himself as a craftsman in his own right, and eagerly undertook the task. Even then he had to descend to petty trickery. He went to each fellow mason in turn and told them that he could not afford to pay for the necessary stone, his father having left him penniless, which was a lie in itself; old Emanuel had tucked away many a hard-earned penny which Julius had made fly in the inn at the near-by township of Kreutzberg.

However, his fellow masons believed him, their simple faith being that a man did not lie about such things. The stone was worked on a communal basis, each man paying for what he used, and a man did not cheat his brother in such matters.

Eleven times over Julius collected the money; only when he went to the door of old Hans Werner did the lie die on his lips before the old man's piercing eyes, so that he slunk away wordlessly.

He never bought a block of stone at all, but frittered the money away.

The other craftsmen were busy with their task, proudly showing each other the progress made and generous of praise for a fellow mason's endeavours. Only Julius kept his lonely house a little way above the village and snarled like a dog at any who approached, keeping locked the shed backing on to the cottage which formed his workshop. At the end, he told himself, he would cadge some more money or perhaps beg a block of stone, and then he would show them all, especially that Hans Werner with his ice-cold eyes.

HE never showed Hans Werner anything, for one morning the old man was found dead, and death had come to him as a master craftsman would always wish, chisel in hand, kneeling at the foot of the stone from which the half-formed face of the Christ he was fashioning looked out.

They buried the old man with the sober sorrow befitting one whose course had run to its fulfilment, and then the problem was who should carry on the old man's work, and Julius Kugler, with barefaced audacity, came forward and volunteered. (*Continued on page 72*)

As she put the cup down the liquid splashed up and a blood-red drop fell on the man's sandalled foot

600 million greetings

by

BARBARA HARMAN

Post early...post securely...There are 600,000,000 other letters in the post

"IT'S worse than election time and all the soap coupons put together, is Christmas," said my dejected postman when I was foolish enough, one crisp October morning, to comment on the exciting approach of Christmas.

I must have looked a little puzzled at this rather odd mixture of ideas, for he explained: "They're all mass postings, and Christmas is the worst of the lot. Do you know, lady, that we handled 625 million items last Christmas? And with only 130,000 extra staff, part-time most of them *and* not used to our ways. And as like as not you'll be writing more than ever this year—you always do, every year."

I didn't point out to him that I personally dislike writing at least as much as he dislikes delivering cards. I felt the conversation was getting much too personal. But relentlessly he went on, accusing me, *The Public*. "If only you posted early and addressed correctly," although he conceded that we do write better than we used to. "Must be all this education." And then, looking more spaniel-like than I could bear, he departed, calling up the stairs: "And you might *pack* better. No shortage of good paper and strong string *now*!"

Remorse swept through me. I resolved that come what may, this year I would post exactly a day before the posters urged me to, and I would pack with love and care. I also decided to do penance for the past, and to make a pilgrimage to find out what exactly a long-suffering post office had to put up with at Christmas.

So I went to Mount Pleasant, London's biggest sorting office, where the Christmas rush, as far as parcels are concerned, was in full swing. All the presents which a few weeks later again go through the post were already there—only on this their first, unsentimental journey they were on the way from manufacturer to shop. I watched mail-van after mail-van arrive from the sub post offices and disgorge their contents down mysterious holes. Conveyor belts then took the parcels up again from the dungeons and "rained" them gently on to a huge, crowded, slippery slope—called the "glacis"—from where they slid slowly on to "rough-sort desks." And there and then I vowed never again to "pack shoddily."

WHAT those parcels have to go through! From the rough-sort desks they are taken by sorters who each have fourteen "destination baskets," in two rows of seven, in front of them. With what looks like careless abandon they throw each parcel into the appropriate basket (and now do you see why you should put county or country in big letters?)

After this first stage of their journey, there are more journeys by van, train and conveyor belt until, via one or more further sorting stations, the parcel arrives, miraculously intact, at its final destination.

I was assured that parcels marked FRAGILE (in *very* big letters, please) receive special treatment. And I must say in fairness that the sorters' aim is excellent, and that they never waste an ounce of energy in their throws—tempting as that must be! However, for inevitable casualties there is "Damaged Duty." Normally three (at Christmas up to twelve) men here repack parcels which couldn't stand the pace.

Without a doubt, every parcel I saw there had been packed badly to start with. String is too loosely tied (a very common sin) and so a soldier's dirty (*Continued on page* 64)

Cottage

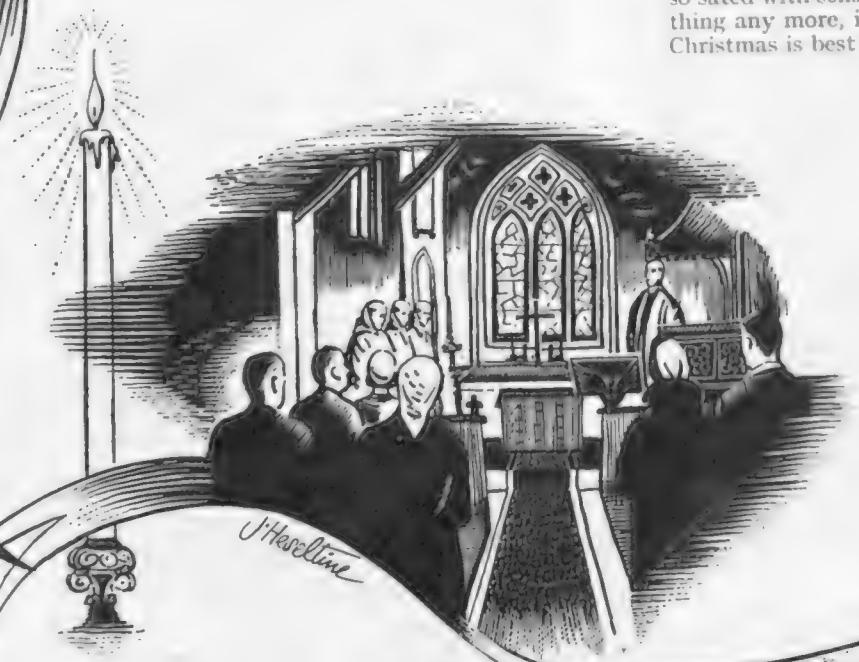
It was unplanned, unexpected, this visit to the Cotswolds. Yet it turned out the best of Christmases, a time of simple charm and magic . . . says

C. HENRY WARREN

IN the end it all turned out perfectly, as things unplanned and unexpected sometimes will do. In fact, it was one of the best Christmases I have spent; and yet so little happened that I am wondering how I can convey in words the simple charm, the magic of it.

The odd thing was that we were rather dreading Christmas that year. It seemed certain that we should have to stay in London for it; and this, of course, to any countryman born and bred is unthinkable. Not among shoppers jostled together in the great emporiums or in brightly decorated hotel dining-rooms will he find the spirit of Christmas. Your true countryman must have the quiet fields all about him at this season and the far-off village bells pealing under frosty skies. He must be among the folk who, when they meet him in the lane and bid him: "A merry Christmas!" really mean what they say.

Nor is this so very unreasonable, after all. For did not the first Christmas happen in a village which nobody would otherwise have heard of? Homely straw off the fields was the sufficient bed, the home a stable. And I am convinced that, these two thousand years after, though the jet planes fly faster than sound and man is so sated with sensation that he is hardly touched by anything any more, it is still in simplicity that the spirit of Christmas is best discovered



Illustrations

By

JOHN HESELTINE

Christmas in the Cotswolds

I have stood in wonder before the biggest Christmas tree in the world, which every year they plant in the granite heart of New York, beneath the towering sky-scrapers of the Rockefeller Centre; but I was not conscious of the presence of the true spirit of Christmas. I have feasted at this season in one of the great hotels of Upper Egypt and watched the shining-faced Nubians, in white caps and scarlet sashes, bear in the flaming plum puddings; but I do not remember feeling very near to Nazareth. I came a good deal nearer that Christmas I spent in a German schoolmaster's house in the Black Forest — the very Land of Christmas. The candles spluttered on the tree, and in silence we watched them go out, one by one, filling the room with the scent of forest pines, and then, suddenly, in the hushed darkness mother and child sang "*Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht,*" sweet as angels singing. Yes, I was aware then of that elusive spirit brushing by.

But even more, though I can hardly tell why, I was aware of it this Christmas of which I am writing. Instead of having to spend it in London, as we had feared, there came a last-minute reprieve.

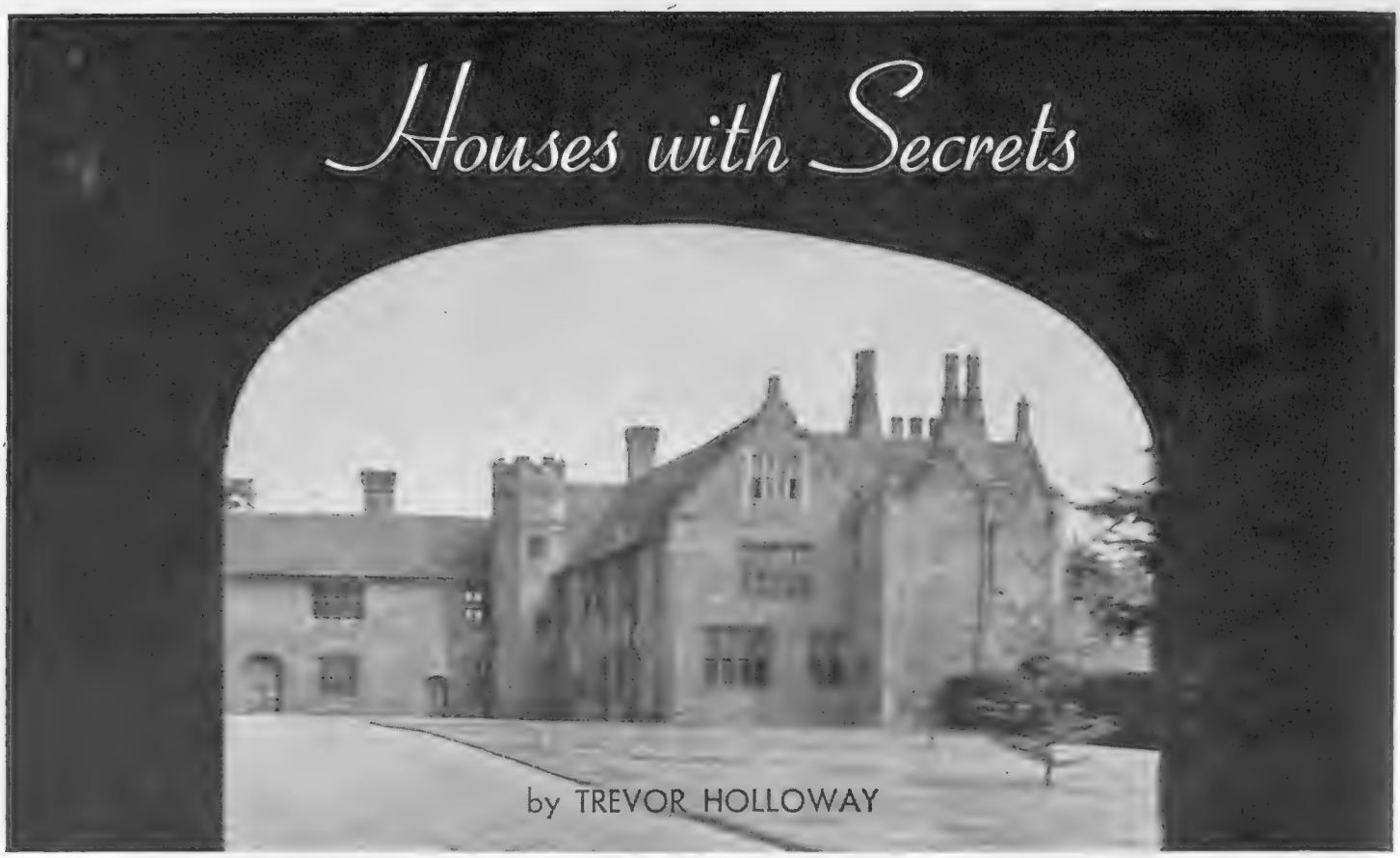
Suddenly we found ourselves free, on the afternoon of December 23, to go home to our Cotswold cottage. A telegram was despatched to the invaluable Mrs. Alder, asking her to get the place ready. The shaky old car was loaded with hamper and bottles and, just as dusk was falling, we set off down the Great West Road.

ALL the way to Reading it rained, cold and cheerless. But this could not damp our happy mood: we were free! After Swindon, we began to notice that the cars coming off the wolds were sprinkled with snow; and then, as we climbed, snow fell in earnest. Like horses turned for home, we put on speed, fancying we could already smell the log-fire which Mrs. Alder would certainly have lighted for us.

And then a strange thing happened. We were approaching Cirencester, when, on the snowy verges by the roadside, our lights suddenly picked out a little group of figures, clad in coloured eastern robes, lanterns dangling from their hands, as they stood back to let us pass.

Out of the dark night they came, thrusting back the centuries, (*Continued on page* 70)

Houses with Secrets



by TREVOR HOLLOWAY

Outside the films and fiction is a reality surviving today in many old houses—relics of sterner times and perilous days

SECRET rooms, sliding panels, hidden passages. . . . How *would* thriller writers and film story people get along without them? Many are the heroes of fiction and screen who have arrived on the scene in the nick of time via a sliding panel, or vanished through one a split second before the villain of the piece burst into the room with revolver at the ready.

But if you are under the impression that such exciting ways of escape or concealment exist only in the realms of make-believe you are very much mistaken, for a great many such secret places may still be seen in scores of Britain's old houses today.

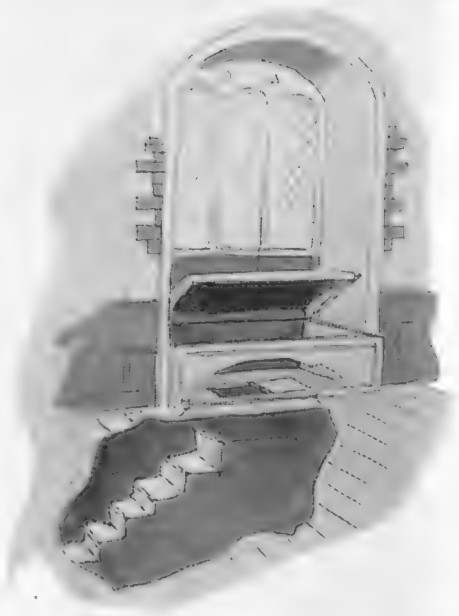
It was largely due to the ruthless hunting down of Catholic priests during the reign of Elizabeth Tudor that the majority of these hide-outs came to be constructed. Actually, there were very few top-ranking religious or political leaders of those days but who deemed it prudent to have some place of refuge or way of escape conveniently to hand.

Many of the finest examples were the handiwork of an undersized cripple named Nicholas Owen, a Jesuit carpenter who was a genius at contriving such places for the convenience of the persecuted Catholics. For years he laboured at this work with fanatical zeal, ever with a price on his head, until eventually Elizabeth's priest-hunters ran him to earth at Hindlip Manor, near the city of Worcester. He was taken to the Tower of London and tortured to death in diabolical manner—but not one of the people who had employed him did he betray, nor tell where the hiding places he had constructed were to be found.

This is the kind of hiding place Charles II used after his defeat at Worcester. A sliding panel, a trapdoor, a hidden room in the chimney breast and a secret exit

THE county of Worcester is particularly rich in stories and examples of secret hiding places. The gaunt moat-encircled pile of Harvington Hall, for example, has no fewer than ten concealed priests' holes, and there are probably many more as yet undiscovered.

When Charles II found it necessary to hide after his defeat at Worcester, it was to Boscobel House he went, for here were several well-constructed hide-outs. One of these was entered through a cunningly concealed sliding panel in the wainscoting. A trapdoor in the floor could be lifted to reveal a recess about six feet square. This chamber was connected by steps inside the great chimney to a creeper-clad exit in the garden. Ingatestone Hall in Essex, the house pictured above, has a hidden priests' hole.



Example of the not-so-innocent window seat like that to be seen in Parham Hall, Sussex. The steps are cut in the wall

At Bayons Manor, in Lincolnshire, is a particularly ingenious device for aiding a fugitive. In the state room of this old residence is the family crest. When a certain part of it is touched it silently revolves and a flight of wooden steps is revealed.

Maybe it was at Bayons Manor originated the expression "watch your step"—at any rate, these (*Continued on page* 64)

Henry's neat, black-coated, striped-trousered mind thought in terms of the "usual channels." But not Serena. . . . **DOROTHY BLACK** writes a light-hearted story

No Trouble at All

"MEN!" said Mrs. Mountjoy. "Honestly . . . I mean. . . . When you think how the whole world is being at this moment run by them, it makes you wonder things aren't in a worse way than they are."

Mary Canning looked over the vase of carnations they always placed on the table of an old and honoured member of that select ladies' club, and thought how little Serena Mountjoy had changed. Indeed, apart from a few lines about the eyes and a certain firmness about the mouth, she was much the girl she had always been. Not even any fatter. There weren't three years between them, but there might have been ten. I, thought Mary, have put it on, but there you are. I like my food and I don't worry. . . .

The club they were lunching in had a fine view out over a London square in which a number of men stood frozen forever in marble, bronze or stone, solidified in dignified attitudes.

"What have you against men, I mean more particularly this morning," asked Mary. "Has Charles been. . . ?"

Illustrations by PHILIP TOWNSEND

"Men never see beyond the ends of their noses. That's what's wrong. They have no originality, no flexibility. You know quite well that Harold often drives you mad, only you are too loyal to say so."

"Well, just occasionally. . . . But then I remind myself how sound his judgment is, and how much I really admire him. . . ."

"When the time comes that a woman has to remind herself how much she admires her husband's sound judgment. . . . But let it pass. . . . Let it pass. . . ." said Serena savagely spearing a butter pat. Mary was not particularly listening to her. She just wheeled the willing ear into position and left it there, which was all that was necessary, when Serena was off on one of her pet topics. All you were required to do was listen, and Mary had been listening on and off for years.

She sat back, and thought how pretty Serena looked in that navy polka dot, and how young. She hadn't put on any weight, whereas I, thought Mary. . . . She took a quick glance in the mirror over the way. It sent her no reassuring message. And if I wore an asinine little hat like that, I'd look mad, she thought sadly. Serena merely looks sweet.

AT the same time as these thoughts passed through her mind, there was a sort of backcloth of good ideas forming, about what she would do with the mutton left-overs for supper.

"What maddens me," said Serena, "is these magnificent phrases and catch-words men invent for themselves and then become hypnotized by. For years now, Charles, a level-headed and intelligent human being (though to my mind un-enterprising) has had a battle cry—a banner with a strange device, dear. . . . The Usual Channels. One must approach by, or through them, one must apply via them. . . .

"In my mind," said Serena helping herself to a liver croquette because as usual beef was off, "I see them stretching before me drearily into a grey infinity. . . . Like tram lines. . . . The only rows Charles and I ever have are over the Usual Channels. They are the altar at which he worships, whereas I never by any chance go through them if I can find a more interesting short cut. Charles is furious with me at the moment because, instead of letting him apply for leave in the usual way, I happened to sit next his boss at dinner, and so naturally. . . ."

"And did he get it?"

"Of course he got it. . . . We are going to Majorca, but from the way Charles is behaving at the moment anyone would think he was being sent into exile on Elba. Charles has this burning itch to fill in forms."

"I suppose it saves a lot of trouble. . . ." said Mary. She was an easy-going girl, all for a quiet life, and not like Serena, forever rebelling against something or other.

Also, in her mind, she had just decided that with a little gelatine added to set it, and a few cherries to garnish it, last night's fool could reappear as shape. Harold was, culinarily speaking, not demanding.

"IT isn't as though Charles had not had it proved to him over and over—that I am right about this. I have no objection to a good rule here and there, darling. What I object to is the way people have been dragooned, queued up, and instructed by newspapers, and poked from behind, until they have positively no initiative left. We're all bogged down, like—like toad in the hole."

(With a start of pleasure Mary made a note of that delectable dish. However had she come to forget it for so long? Tasty, as well as easy to prepare.)

"Take, for instance, that business about our frig. Where would we be now, I ask you, if I had gone through the Usual Channels."

"What frig. was that?" Mary asked vaguely, tearing herself with difficulty from contemplation of a toad in the hole. Golden brown and bubbling.

"What?" Serena said astonished. "You mean to say I never told you the story of our frig. in the war? Darling, I can't think however you escaped that one. You remember we came home from Singapore just before—and there we were, forced to furnish at the very worst possible time, and Charles with no idea beyond the Usual Channels of a furniture shop, which accounts for those ghastly pieces in the flat.

"We hadn't been married long then, and I gave in to Charles a great deal more than I do now. It wasn't until he went into the hospital with that burst appendix, poor darling, that I was able to buy for an old song two of those old-fashioned and long-forgotten bedside tables, darling, that had such sinister uses in other days but are now no longer

An awe-stricken, almost holy look came into the house-agent's eyes. "You mean you purchased this property merely to get the frig. out of the kitchen?" he asked incredulously

in circulation. I knocked the insides out, and put in shelves and palmed them off on Charles as a couple of antique book cases. To this day he has no idea of their humble origins."

"You're so clever . . . I would never have thought. . . ."

"Not clever, darling. Only inventive. I *do* have a few good ideas just now and then—and the frig. was certainly one of them. I had a terrible time with Charles all that spring. His op. cost the earth and after that he had to go to the seaside to recuperate, and you know what hotels were just then. It was 1944, darling, when the spots we saw before our eyes weren't liver, but bombs. . . .

"We returned to London, with Charles on a milk diet, and the most elementary larder arrangements in the flat. Nowhere to keep anything. The milk and fish were forever off and I was driven almost crazy. I had that ghastly Mrs. Porchester working for me at the time — you remember the one—she enjoyed every disaster like a picture in Glorious Technical-colour! When the revolution came, she liked to tell me, many heads would roll in the gutter, and from the look in her eye I had a suspicion mine would be amongst the first, and not without a little assistance from her.

"It was all these things added together, that goaded me to take the step I did take—a thing no woman really *likes* doing—but needs must when the Devil drives. Cost me what it might, I had to have a frig. and you know what it was just then. Everything in short supply and the shop assistants positively bloated with triumph when they could tell you so. . . .

"Not being mentally tied to the Usual Channels, I got my frig. and had just had it installed, and was becoming a trifle anxious over the whole affair and trying to make up my mind to tell Charles the whole story—when Charles came into my room, darling, more shaken than I have ever seen him. White-faced and trembling, a letter in his hand.

"FIRST I thought someone had blown the gaff, as it were. Then I fully expected he was about to confess to me that he had been unfaithful to me with his nurse—so I was relieved when all it was—was a letter from his bank saying his overdraft had now reached one thousand pounds, and something must be done about it. So thoughtless—sending him a note like that when he was just out of hospital. Like the income tax demand that comes on Christmas Day."

"Oh, poor old Charles. Whatever did you say?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, I had a wild desire to laugh. Charles thought his overdraft was around a thousand, whereas I knew to my cost that before very long it looked like being nearer two thousand . . . I had bought a house. . . ."

"A whole house? On your own?"

"Rash, of course—but as houses go it was cheap. At that time people weren't buying much London property. The reason I did it was that amongst the fixtures listed was 'Frig. in good working order.' I went along immediately to the agents and asked if I could buy the frig. alone, but hundreds of other people had had the same idea, and there was nothing doing. So, darling, rather than let the thing slip through my fingers, I bought the whole house. When I'd paid the deposit I hadn't a bean left in my bank account either—but nothing venture, nothing have. I moved the frig. in to the flat at the earliest opportunity.

"NO more sour milk. No more faded fish. Charles put on weight before my eyes—though I feared he might lose a pound or so again when he heard all. He already spent a lot of time with his head in his hands, worrying about the overdraft he knew he had. One day, just to try him out, I said: 'What would you do if it was four thousand pounds you owed instead of one?'

"'File my petition,'" he said grimly. (For a moment I got quite a start, thinking he meant divorce, and not bankruptcy.) 'I hope you've not been up to anything?'

"'Oh no, darling,'" I lied, hoping my voice sounded not too hollow and unconvincing. After all, I was doing it for his own good and he was not strong enough yet for the whole truth. Mercifully not being the sort of man who pokes about the kitchen knocking up little omelettes at odd hours, he had never met the (*Continued on page 62*)

Putting up the holly is part of the fun of Christmas.

MICHAEL SHERIDAN talks about decorating a room with taste and without fuss and artist John LAWRENCE shows you a room with festive trimmings that are easy to make and easy to live with

All the FUN —without the Fuss

SAY what you like during the last frenzied rush about the whole thing being a "commercial racket." Bemoan the "wastefulness" of Christmas cards as you will. But I'll wager that Christmas Eve finds you like the rest of us perched precariously on a pair of steps, a sprig of holly in one hand, those maddeningly elusive drawing pins in the other and a ball of twine between your teeth. He would be a Scrooge indeed who did not cheerfully succumb to the yearly rite of "doing the decorations."

For although the Christmas card is less than a hundred years old, holly and mistletoe—both, oddly enough relics of the pre-Christian Druids—have been synonymous with the English Christmas for nearly eight centuries. So this is no time for "contemporary" decorations, for fanciful modernistic Christmas trees or Picassoesque reindeer.

Nothing could be more traditional than the Christmas story and nothing will turn Santa Claus into a contemporary figure. So let's not be ashamed of our holly, our tinsel, our artificial frost and the rest of the glittering magic of tradition. But paying our respects to tradition need not mean sticking a piece of holly over each picture and a row of cards—which make dusting a nightmare and, anyway, always blow down—over the mantelpiece.

GENEROSITY is perhaps the keynote of successful Christmas decoration. One good bunch of holly properly arranged and placed will make a braver show than the same amount dotted about in lonely sprigs. If necessary, take a lesson from our European neighbours and eke it out with other evergreens : cupressus, ivy and yew. And let the individual characteristics of the room, rather than mere custom, dictate the most effective place for them.

A beam cries out to be covered with small pieces fixed with drawing pins; the top of a pelmet board demands to be treated as a kind of inverted window-box of holly—the room may need little other decoration. Make good use of the delicate coloured glass decorations sold for Christmas trees by mixing them with evergreens, especially if berries are scarce. If necessary the "pin" can be removed from the top and the bauble fitted to the end of a twig.

It seems contrary to tradition to provide water for our Christmas evergreens but arrange holly in shallow bowls or baskets with containers for water—with a few glass balls for highlights—and you will not be faced with those pathetic, shrivelled remnants that most decorations become by Twelfth Night. In this way, too, small sprigs and "off-cuts" that might otherwise be wasted are turned to good account.

THE kissing bunch, with its honoured place in folklore, is one of our most traditional decorations—although it is rarely seen today. The one in our sketch is made from four ordinary wooden hoops of equal size covered with silver tape paper. Form three hoops into a sphere, tying them securely together where they intersect. Push the fourth hoop into place over the sphere so that it makes a kind of equator.

At the top of the sphere is arranged a generous bunch of holly bedecked with a bright ribbon bow and at the bottom—most important of all, if the kissing bunch is to live up to its name—a large bunch of mistletoe. Inside the sphere hang a few coloured glass balls on ribbons of different lengths. If you want to be really traditional, incidentally, rosy apples will take the place of the balls. The hoops are finally decorated with small sprigs of holly at intervals and to the equator hoop are fixed small candles in wire holders, which can themselves be disguised with holly.

Christmas table decorations will do much to ensure that the dinner prepared at (*Continued on page* 66)

John

Return of

Illustration by

BILL HAYTOR walked through the compound, slowly, unarmed and completely sure of himself. The moon was so bright and white that you could have read small print in her light. She lighted up the Aberdares to the right, Mount Kenya in front, and somehow the hyena hooted louder in the lighted-up mass of thorn trees beneath the ridge on which Bill's house stood. He reached the house, stopped, looked back and saw a house-boy come out of the kitchen carrying a pail. The boy went towards a hut on the edge of the compound. Bill smiled. "Mau Mau," he said half aloud and went indoors.

It was nice to be back on his farm in Kenya after four long years. It was amusing to come back at a time when, apparently, the country was in turmoil, murders were committed right and left and evil was rampant. Where does civilisation, imported by the white man, come in and where does the witch doctor go out? He had expounded on that on board the liner that had brought him back to the land where he had lived for so many years. Bill believed in his own form of reasoning and his arguments frequently turned into statements.

He told an anxious woman on the liner that he was stationed in London during the blitz, yet nothing

She was a lovely girl, calmly accepting the horror her sun-dappled land now held. He was arrogant . . . .

a Stranger

S. TRESILIAN

. . . . unbelieving, until the incredible happened. A story of Kenya to-day . . . by PETER DE POLNAY

happened to him except being once nearly run over by an Army lorry, which, he asked the woman to admit, could have happened in peacetime, too. The woman admitted that, and now he was back on the farm. It was a pity that admitting hadn't allayed the woman's fears.

In the sitting-room he poured himself out a drink and had the sudden urge to discuss with anybody who was willing to listen the whole Mau Mau business and the white man's under-estimation of the native's mind. He held strong views on that subject, and it would be no good telling him that he had been away from Africa too long. But his nearest neighbour lived six miles away. He rang the bell and Komaki, his head boy, came in. Komaki had been with him since before the war and was a Kikuyu to boot.

"Komaki," said Bill, "do you think any of the boys here on the farm are Mau Mau?"

"If they were," said Komaki, "they would be taken away, their sheep impounded and their cattle, too. No Mau Mau."

"Of course not," said Bill. "You see, I don't even carry a gun."

"*Bwana* has a gun."

"Yes, but I don't carry it. All right, Komaki, I will dine in an hour." (*Continued on page* 58)

S. Tresilian

When Turkeys Trekked

By DOREEN GORSKY

Painting by PAULINE BAYNES

A TRAVELLER to-day between London and Norwich, meeting a flock of turkeys walking to London, with their feet neatly shod in leather boots, would rub his eyes with astonishment. Yet before the advent of the railways it was a common enough sight, for it was the way in which turkeys for the Christmas dinner reached London, taking a week or more in the process. Geese travelled in the same way, but were less accommodating, refusing to wear boots for the journey. Instead they were shod with tar and grit.

This annual pilgrimage of the Christmas dinner to London gave rise to an unusual wager. Two noble lords staked large sums of money on the result of a race between a flock of geese and a flock of turkeys between Norwich and London. The geese won handsomely by more than a day for, like the tortoise in his race with the hare, they just kept waddling on, picking up food as they went, snatching a short nap as and where they could. The turkeys moved much faster when they were on the trail, but nothing would stop them claiming a good night's rest roosting in a tree by the roadside.

The turkey, synonymous with Christmas dinner in the minds of most people, was first brought to England from Mexico by Vasco da Gama towards the middle of the sixteenth century. At first the right to use it was reserved for Court officials and high Ecclesiastical dignitaries, but by 1700 it had reached the universal popularity which it enjoys to-day.

> Sometimes with oysters we combine,
> Sometimes assist the sav'ry chine;
> From the low peasant to the Lord,
> The turkey smokes on every board.
>
> JOHN GAY, 1700.

Previous reference to turkeys such as that found in Shakespeare's *Henry IV* (Act ii., sc. 1, v. 19): "Odsbody, the turkeys in my pannier are quite starved," referred to the birds we now know as guinea-fowl.

Before 1700 the main dish for the Christmas feast was provided by other birds. The roast beef of Old England never held sway as the centre of the Christmas feast. It is probable that in early times it was a rangy, (*Continued on page 71*)

Turkeys with boots on, geese who won a race, bustard, swan and peacock—the Christmas dinners our ancestors enjoyed

to Town

The lamb.

Paradise for Toys

Devereux Court—from the Temple

By PAMELA FRY

THE Humpty-Dumpty was made by hand over a hundred years ago. He was really no more than a couple of grubby bits of velvet and cotton, painstakingly sewn together—but what a spark of mischief still remained in his funny, pencilled-in face. And at the flick of your hand he would turn somersaults as beautifully as ever.

To the left of him, the exotic scarlet-and-white Burmese puppets dangled arrogantly from their strings; across the room stood the bright painted wood horses from India; in the dolls' corner the Edwardian wedding continued its endless ceremony—the gentlemen in their shiny top-hats, the beautiful ladies, their pearls and posies and laces only faintly ruffled by the inexorable passage of time.

In common with all the toys, Humpty wore a definite air of expectancy. At any moment he might be requested to come alive again, to go through his paces, warming to the delight of children, the nostalgic pleasure of adults. And all around him, old toys rubbed shoulders with new; toys from nearly every country in the world crowded along the shelves, ready to exchange anecdotes or compare mechanisms.

This Hans Andersen dream of a toy's paradise was not hidden away in the pages of a fairy tale. On the contrary, it was a very real and unusual toy museum, the only one of its kind in the world—and it had its first opening in London last summer.

For its initial exhibition, crowded into the small basement room of an old house in Devereux Court, London, the museum could provide no more than a token display of toys. Yet even within this confined space its purpose was sketched in bold and colourful outline. Here the toys were not imprisoned in the fusty silence of glass cases. All of them were helping to tell the story which began at the moment when the first baby stretched out a chubby hand for the bit of bone or seed-pod which became the world's earliest rattle. Here, in this tiny museum, each toy played its part in illustrating the history and development of toys all over the world. They revealed the pattern of children's play, changing and growing as the world grew, yet remaining essentially the same—a pattern as ageless as childhood itself.

The man behind the scenes—or to be more precise—the man behind the toys—is a very remarkable person called Leslie Daiken. His toy museum is the result of twelve years of practical experiment and research into the history of children's toys and games. A graduate in languages from Dublin University, Mr. Daiken started his career as a writer, publishing several books of prose and poetry. But for fifteen years he also lectured and taught, covering every age group from kindergarten level upwards—fifteen years of children grappling with their lessons, or, in fidgety mood, shooting paper pellets, and scribbling in the margins.

FOR many people it would have been a trying experience. Mr. Daiken found it fascinating. As he watched his students, his curiosity grew: a bit of rubber and paper became a catapult, a piece of string a cat's cradle; a matchbox, a boat—why this insatiable need for movement, for continuous play? He began serious research into the subject of children's games, then, inevitably, of children's toys.

He wrote a number of instructional films and radio programmes on the subject of the relation of play to education. What began as casual curiosity, aroused by a restless schoolchild, had rapidly expanded into a life work. Next came two books: *Games Throughout The Year*, and a history of toys, *Toys Throughout The Ages*. And, finally, Leslie Daiken conceived the idea of the toy museum.

"The thought came to me," (*Continued on page* 66)

The first toy museum—near the Middle Temple—is dedicated to the history of fun which the centuries have hardly changed at all

Colour photograph: Deighton Wilkes

Dear CHARLOTTE

It was so difficult for Ursula to resist Charlotte's invitations. Still, Barty was strong and silent and could handle the situation admirably . . .

"I'M not going to argue about it, darling," said Bartholomew. "All I say is that you've got to put a stop to it."

"But it's so *childish*!" Ursula looked at him with large, indignant eyes. "Charlotte and I were at school together in Switzerland!"

"You've told me that before. Anyhow, I fail to see the connection."

"She was frightfully kind to me when I was so homesick. She needn't have been. I was much younger than she was. . . ."

"Oddly enough you are still younger than she is. Incidentally this is a most unprofitable conversation. Need it go on?"

"Well, you can't expect me to drop my best friend just like that."

"I can and do expect it."

They looked at each other, and exchanged the slight smile of mutual exasperation. They had been married exactly two months.

"Barty," she said suddenly, "do listen. I like all *your* friends; I think they're fun. I'm awfully glad that you know such jolly people. So I think you might like mine."

"Little Bear, I do. I find most of them charming. But I draw the line at Charlotte. If you must go into it all again, I

Illustrations by JEAN GALLIA

By

BARBARA GOOLDEN

think she's very bad for you because every time you see her she makes you discontented and restless. Her ideas and ours are poles apart, and that being so, the less you see of her the better. I'm sorry I'm not rolling in money, but you happen to have married me and there it is."

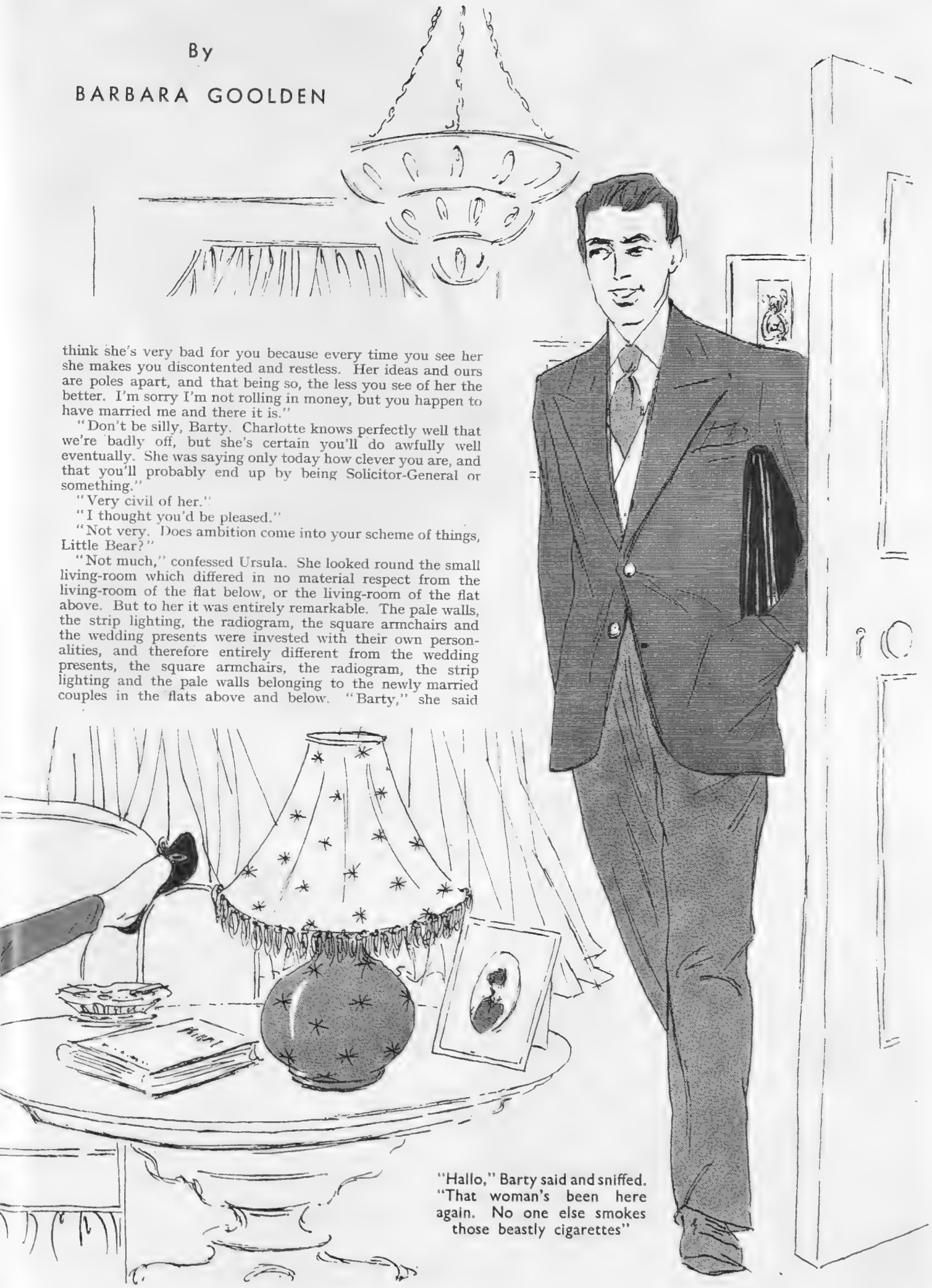
"Don't be silly, Barty. Charlotte knows perfectly well that we're badly off, but she's certain you'll do awfully well eventually. She was saying only today how clever you are, and that you'll probably end up by being Solicitor-General or something."

"Very civil of her."

"I thought you'd be pleased."

"Not very. Does ambition come into your scheme of things, Little Bear?"

"Not much," confessed Ursula. She looked round the small living-room which differed in no material respect from the living-room of the flat below, or the living-room of the flat above. But to her it was entirely remarkable. The pale walls, the strip lighting, the radiogram, the square armchairs and the wedding presents were invested with their own personalities, and therefore entirely different from the wedding presents, the square armchairs, the radiogram, the strip lighting and the pale walls belonging to the newly married couples in the flats above and below. "Barty," she said



"Hallo," Barty said and sniffed. "That woman's been here again. No one else smokes those beastly cigarettes"

When they arrived at the glittering hotel, April charm seemed somehow a little too consciously naïve for Ursula

again. "Charlotte means to be *kind*. She was only warning me not to become so absorbed in my home that I forget everything else, and more or less degenerate into a yes-woman."

"A what?"

"WELL, of course, *I* know you're not that kind of a husband, but Charlotte says she's known so many wives of brilliant husbands who've just subordinated their own interests and remained in the background, and more or less kept things going during the early years, and then, when their husbands became famous, they found themselves rather high and dry, without any further object in life, which made them almost always boring, and then their husbands got fed up and the whole thing ended miserably."

"I never heard such claptrap in all my life," returned Bartholomew vigorously. "It's completely unsound anyway. The wives of famous men are *never* bored; they have the whale of a time. The more a woman identifies herself with her husband's career the greater her triumph when he succeeds in it. Might I mildly inquire what Charlotte suggests you should do in order to acquire outside interest?"

"I thought we weren't going to argue, darling. However, if you really want to know, she thinks it's a mistake my always being in when you bring work home from chambers and spend the evening poring over the contents of your brief-case. She says why sit mute in a corner, mending your socks, when I might be at a theatre or a party, which would not only be amusing for me, but would also make me much better company for you afterwards. She doesn't say *often*, perhaps once or twice a week."

"IS *that* all? Would there be enough parties to go round?"

"That's what I rather wondered, but she says she knows heaps of people, and she could take me to some herself."

"Would she also pay for the theatre?"

"She didn't suggest that, Barty, so I don't know."

"Well I *do* know. When you go to the theatre you go with me. And the same thing applies to parties."

"Does it?"

"Look here," said Bartholomew patiently, "I think this is a rotten way of spending a Sunday evening, but let it go. Since when have you yearned to go gay all by yourself?"

"I don't want to go gay at all. All I mean is that I do see Charlotte's point. And if she asks me to make up a party for some show, or a dance, or something, on an evening when you happen to be working, I oughtn't to feel faint at the idea. That's all."

"I see. Well, *I* shouldn't feel faint at all. I should, on the contrary, feel uncommonly strong. . . . It doesn't, I suppose, occur to the ghastly Charlotte that I bring work home in order to earn more fees for the benefit of my disturbingly ungrateful spouse?"

"Barty, don't be a brute. I'm *not* ungrateful. I think it's wonderful of you."

He came over to sit beside her on the sofa. "Then what are we talking about?" But when he had kissed her, she took hold of the long, legal chin and shook it.

"Barty, I'm not giving in. *Don't* look at me like that, we're not in Court. I should hate to be cross-examined by you. Your eyes go ice-grey and your mouth's *grim*. . . ."

"Good; I'm delighted to hear it. Not that you look quite as alarmed as I could wish. Incidentally, (*Continued on page* 60)

Whose Christmas IS It?

For homes where adults and children don't always agree on this point HUMPHREY KNIGHT has a plan . . .

PERHAPS for most of us who do not live on northern heights, it will never snow on Christmas Day again. And the morning waking to a white, silent world can be only a nostalgic memory even if Christmas cards in bland defiance of changing meteorological conditions always picture lots of snow and excessively red-breasted robins.

But if the snow has gone—topically at least—Christmas has not, and every year we face the lovely labour of packing presents in coloured paper (and hiding them from the children), making plum puddings, filling the kitchen with oriental spices for the delight of mince pies and watching Father with an air of tremendous importance order the drinks for the festivities planned from Christmas Eve to Boxing Night. It is at this point that some of our Christmases come unstuck. For whose Christmas is it going to be?

With children in the house, cousins, nephews and nieces living nearby, mothers and aunts tend to come down firmly on the *children's* Christmas side. The day, they say, is theirs by traditional right. Uncles and fathers, whilst agreeing, do (I am both and speak for both) think a little sorrowfully that an adult party or two would be rather fun.

Aunts and mothers agree, but as Officer Commanding the three-day siege, coping with the special cooking, extra guests, extra washing-up, plus the children at concert pitch, they hesitate to try to spend Christmas in two worlds. I think this is wrong and a little sad, too.

CHRISTMAS is for *everyone* and it is perfectly possible to celebrate to the satisfaction of parents as well as children. Here I feel rather like a tout at Epsom shouting: "I've got a horse. I've got a horse!" for I am wanting to shout: "I've got a plan!" It's not rigid, nor is it anything as frightful as an itinerary. It's a nice, easy-going sort of a plan, that can be broken and come to no hurt, that can even be ignored and will not sulk in a corner if it is.

It depends solely on the children. I don't know when the age of reasoning begins in a child. (*Continued on page 74*)

By
JEAN
BATEMAN

Don't

IF women were as honest as the day, they would say, looking at you with candid, but slightly calculating eyes, "It's the gift, not the thought, that counts. Of course perfume . . . but don't you *know* I only use Chanel No. 5?"

Fortunately, most women aren't at all honest about this kind of thing, otherwise the delightful habit of present-giving would, no doubt, become obsolete.

Centuries of feminine deference to the male in all the trivia of existence, however, have taught us to say "just what I wanted" in the correctly rapturous voice when we remove the tissue and see a scarf in all the wrong-for-us colours.

Naturally, we permit ourselves the little wry, inward smile which has become our deep-down defence mechanism against all the small injustices with which we are beset. And we are not un-fortified, in our graceful acceptance, by the knowledge that directly Christmas is over, we can hare round to the shop and change the hideous thing.

There may be some isolated occasions for the kind of present which belongs to its-the-thought-not-the-gift-that-counts class. The start of a love affair, perhaps, when all your talk is of wanting to give her the moon; and then you present her with a bunch of country flowers because they remind you of the colour of her eyes. . . .

The girl may worship you, too, but if she's human she will be looking forward also to a more practical form of moon-like gift. (A moonstone brooch might do nicely to start with.)

But far too often the idea seems to be an excuse for downright meanness, or it becomes the outward expression of an unforgivable form of patronage, usually directed towards the older, more neglected people in our lives. Thus, someone will say "I must give some little something to old Mrs. J. She's happy so long as you remember her." And then blithely forget her until next Christmas.

What is tremendously important, though, is the thought *behind* the gift. For this know-how, watch and emulate your women-folk. Apart from possessing a natural sense of selectivity, and being on familiar ground in the shops, they bring an almost masculine directness of purpose to the job.

Go Christmas shopping with your wife and see how she will move unerringly, in a dead straight line, exactly towards the right gift for the right person. She can do this because a series of preliminary researches and forays have softened up her approaches.

The adroitly tempting Christmas windows and display counters may sway her, perhaps, into an occasional impulse-buy, but even this will be backed by her snap summing-up of her friends' background and interests, and her own sense of the fitting.

Most women, of course, clean up the business of present-giving far more thoroughly than men, scrubbing out the corners and moving the furniture, where men just flick lightly round with a feather duster.

IT is, in fact, not at all unusual for a woman to start planning, budgeting and, if she has the money, actually buying next year's presents directly this Christmas is tucked safely out of harm's reach.

And if an eleven months' forward scheme sounds like carrying things a little too far, it certainly has more to commend it than an eleventh-hour rush.

Last minute shared shopping with the family for the things that have been forgotten can be a gay, tender experience, a deliciously nostalgic part of Christmas. But to pack all your present buying into a couple of frantic hours on the Eve, as so many men do, is not only hard on the resistance; it can also be hard on the recipients.

One of the rules about Christmas shopping is not to stick too firmly to the rules. Your gifts will be just as successful if you occasionally work by contrast. Choose useful gifts, sometimes, for the glamorous, and give frivolously to the

Gentlemen—eleventh-hour gift-hunters for the woman in your life—this is for you!

Listen Ladies!

quiet homebodies. Everybody will shower chunky jewellery, nylon nighties and other delectables on your gadabout sister. But you know that she also likes a cosy night or so at home to catch up on her reading, sleeping and petit point. Give her, then a "Times" library subscription, an Anglepoise lamp so that she doesn't strain her pretty eyes over those chair covers, or a Dunlopillo bed cushion to make her early bedtimes utterly celestial.

Conversely, forget the woolly scarf that was going to your wife's plainish cousin, and send her off to one of the top hair men for a complete re-styling of her rather dreary hair-do. Who knows? It may also be the point of departure to a new life-style.

Today, nylons, like handkerchiefs and gloves, are the standby gift of many men buying presents in a hurry. In a hurry? Time a woman buying nylons for herself. Observe how she will go from place to place in order to find the stockings that are suitable in every way, and for every purpose.

Undeniably, six pairs of nylons is a handsome gift in any language, and, of course, you have taken the trouble to write down the sizes. A few reccies would have kept you informed also of the correct gauges and deniers to look for, and you would hardly have left the colour to the salesgirl who so convincingly assures you that pinky ginger and muddy grey are the very newest shades. . . .

As for your wife, how happy it would make you both if you could say "shut your eyes darling," and casually place a mutation mink wrap around her shoulders. Some day perhaps. Meanwhile, she will settle very serenely for one of those attractive Tescan coats that have put the tone luxury fur touch into what we used to think of as just beaver lamb. . . .

Possibly she is the kind of wife who likes her personal gift to be something for the home. New lamp shades then—better let her choose her own—the dressing-table she's always coveted, the sitting-room done over.

How about a piece of domestic equipment? A new wonder cooker—soon they'll be doing everything but talk—a food mixer, a washing machine, an automatic coffee percolator, one of those fetching irons with button nooks in the toe which make it easy to get at that awkward front button panel? Practically anything electrical must make her life immensely more comfortable and you and the family can share in the bonus.

IF the most acceptable gift in the world to her is to be something abstract like an order to the decorators, or practical like a cooker, there must be some tangible trifle to stand proxy on the Christmas breakfast table. Let it be of the best glamour-boosting variety, to make the best of all possible worlds—a delicious orchid ensconced in florist's Cellophane, a token offering of the most exclusive chocolates, a connoisseur's cigarettes.

However hard you may work at your Christmas present buying, remember that you are a much more difficult person to shop for. You've probably got a watch, a wallet, several fancy waistcoats, all the accessories for your known hobbies, and drawers full of scarves, handkerchiefs, ties and socks.

Undoubtedly your womenfolk will fall back on safies like golf balls, cigarettes, drinks and toilet stuffs, and why not? There may be repetitions, but there won't be mistakes. And when you say "Just what I wanted" on Christmas morning, your voice will have all the authentic ring of sincerity.

Now, men who mean business, like hard, practical facts, the name to ask for, how much it will cost. The business side of this article is on page 73, gentlemen please note, ladies don't listen!

JOURNEY INTO FAIRYLAND

Fairies have not always been charming, diminutive creatures. In fact, the Good Fairy has some disreputable ancestors of not many generations back

by ADELE BARON

ASK anyone to describe a good fairy and the answer will be that she looks something between a ballet dancer and an angel. She has glittering wings, golden hair and wears a tou-tou spangled with stars. She is good and kind and her sole purpose in life is to reward the brave and the fair, defeat evil and set everything right with a wave of her magic wand. She is so familiar down to the last glittering dewdrop on her tiny shoes that one *almost* believes in her.

But how she became the good fairy is a long, long story. In her present guise she is largely a British product. She has some very dubious ancestors, and Shakespeare had a great deal to do with improving both her way of life and her reputation.

Any excursion into the labyrinths of folklore is rather like a journey through an enchanted forest, and just as confusing. Fantasy has been built on fact since the beginning of time and there have been magical creatures in one form or another ever since there have been people to believe in them.

Even the derivation of the names of fairies is just as confusing. The French *fée* is derived from the Latin *fadu* or *fata*, giving our modern fairies a classical pedigree. The word "elves" once referred to divine spirits. Puck originally referred not to one naughty sprite but a whole race of little people and is derived from "pouke" the old word for devil, sponsoring the Cornish *Piskey*, the Irish *Pooka* and the Welsh *Pwcca*.

The precise moment in history when fairies arrived in England is hard to estimate. There seems to be a generally held opinion that the Crusaders imported fairies into Europe from the East and that fairy mythology spread to England via the Scandinavian peninsula. But the most ancient of the British bards had their fairy "spirits of the mountains" and there is a prehistoric belief in "Little Men" which can be traced directly to the attacks Neolithic pigmies once made on the more sober Britishers.

Where they came from is, like the fairies themselves, a fascinating mixture of fact and fiction. But by the Elizabethan era, a large and lively fairy population had settled in the British Isles. Then everyone believed in fairies. There was no choice in the matter, since fairies played so active a rôle in the daily life.

THEN fairyland was underground: "They are sometimes heard to break bread, strike hammers . . . within the little hillocks they most haunt." Green was their favourite colour and silk their favourite material. They were usually very beautiful and they loved music. You could easily catch a glimpse of them dancing in circles and singing in high, clear voices.

The Elizabethan mortals knew the fairy laws and were very careful to observe them. Any breach of the laws, the little folk would punish by death, abduction or pinching. No mortal could occupy a fairy ring (to be on the safe side it was as well to regard all circular spaces in the fields and woods as fairy rings). Mortals (*Continued on page* 73)

Time has changed our idea of fairies. In 1854, Cruikshank painted Cinderella's fairy godmother as a diminutive witch . . .

. . . sixty years later, Dulac gave the good fairy in *Sleeping Beauty* an Edwardian elegance and charm, and today Walt Disney's Tinker Bell is a 1953 cutie

"If ye will with Mab find grace,
Set each platter in its place...
Sweep your house..Who doth not so
Mab will pinch her by the toe"

Acrobats Abounding!

by RUTH MILLER

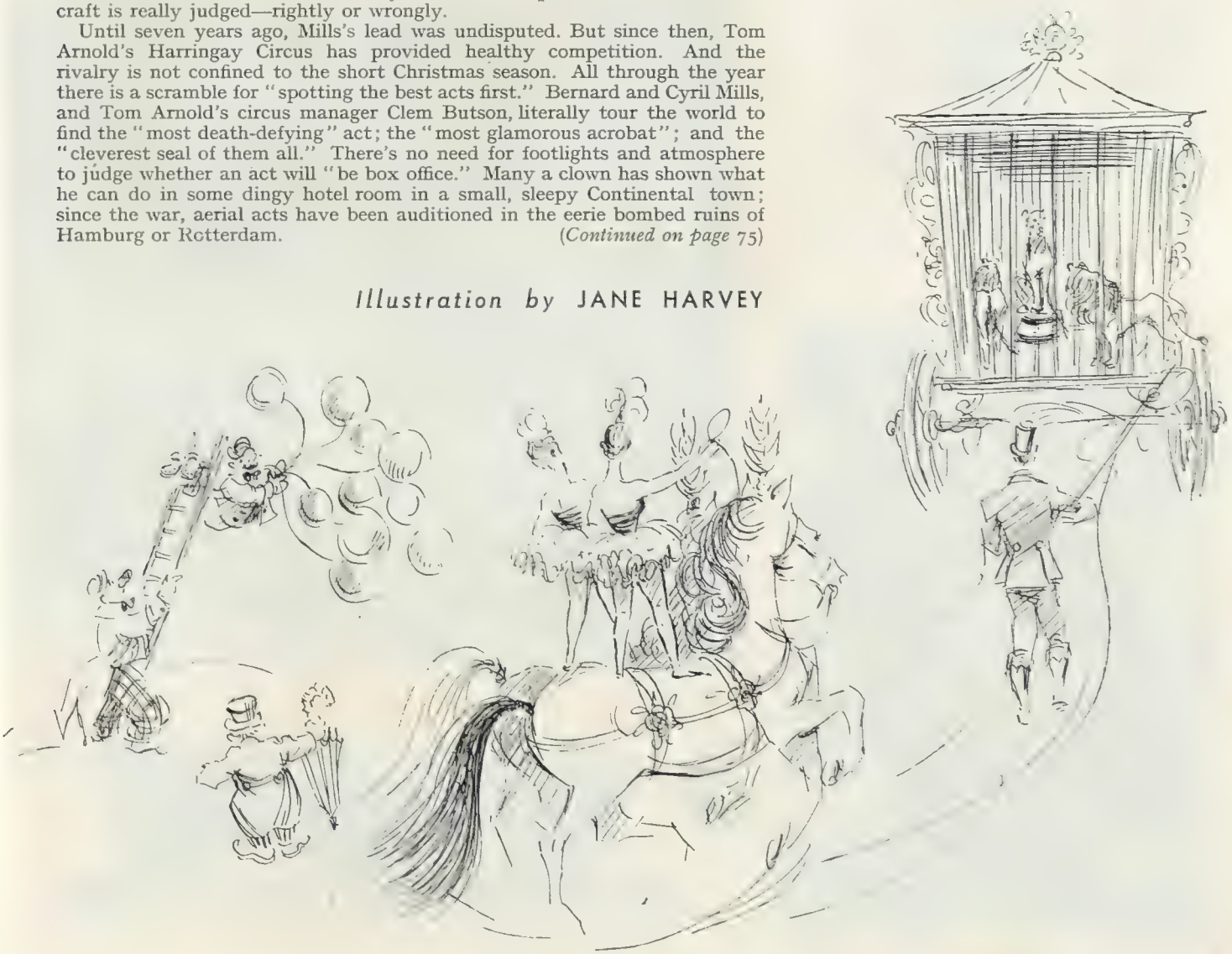
The circus has come to town; bright lights, brisk music and, behind the scenes, the problem of assembling, feeding, clothing and handling a strangely assorted family, tame and otherwise...

IF Bertram Mills, the Mills brothers' father, had not been in the habit of saying "I bet you £100" at the slightest provocation, Olympia and Christmas wouldn't now mean Circus. Some thirty-five years ago, coachbuilder Mills, disgusted with a poor circus performance, said casually to a friend, "I bet you £100 I could put on a better show." "Why don't you?" snapped the friend, and unwittingly changed the course of circus history. For Bertram Mills took up the challenge. In 1920 he put on his first circus at Olympia. Later, his two sons, when they were old enough to be given a free hand, played a great part in revolutionizing the European circus. And now instead of dozens of small, happy-go-lucky travelling menageries, eked out with a few indifferent clowns, there are only a handful of circuses left. But those are first-rate shows, their programmes boasting annually "never-seen-before" dare-devil acts and their organizations streamlined and planned with as much precision and foresight as a military campaign.

On tour, throughout the year, advance parties travel ahead of the Big Top, selecting sites, negotiating with municipal authorities, laying on telephone, water, food and labour. But it is by its Christmas performance that circus-craft is really judged—rightly or wrongly.

Until seven years ago, Mills's lead was undisputed. But since then, Tom Arnold's Harringay Circus has provided healthy competition. And the rivalry is not confined to the short Christmas season. All through the year there is a scramble for "spotting the best acts first." Bernard and Cyril Mills, and Tom Arnold's circus manager Clem Butson, literally tour the world to find the "most death-defying" act; the "most glamorous acrobat"; and the "cleverest seal of them all." There's no need for footlights and atmosphere to judge whether an act will "be box office." Many a clown has shown what he can do in some dingy hotel room in a small, sleepy Continental town; since the war, aerial acts have been auditioned in the eerie bombed ruins of Hamburg or Rotterdam. (*Continued on page* 75)

Illustration by JANE HARVEY



PRESENTS WITH PRACTICAL APPEAL

Present Indicative

CHRISTMAS gifts which help to add a touch of luxury to everyday life are always sure of a specially warm welcome.

1. This is the attractive box in which all Jacqmar gifts will be packed this Christmas. What present could have more practical appeal than a dress length of Jacqmar fabric?

2. Pots of plum, tomato or marrow chutney, home-made from country-fresh ingredients and packed in holly trimmed raffia containers.

3. Coach-hide sports grip with a separate compartment for wet shoes and clothing, but the partition separating top and bottom sections can be removed when a single roomy inside compartment is required. Leather-trimmed tartan covered Pullman bag also has one capacious inside compartment.

4. A very new picnic set for four in scarlet and white plastic; the grey plastic case opens out flat to stand on chromium supports and serves as a picnic table.

5. Teapot, milk jug, condiment set, toast rack, etc. on this breakfast-in-bed tray stand securely in slots in a grooved panel which slides forward into easy reach when required.

6. Keyword, an intriguing new parlour game, makes an inexpensive gift, specially recommended for crossword puzzle enthusiasts.

7. Pure silk Chinese mules, made and embroidered entirely by hand, in rich jewel colours.

8. Escoffier table delicacies, anchovy paste, cocktail savoury and Melba Sauce among them, gift-packed in colourfully decorated china egg cups acceptable in the china cupboard.

Turn to page 70 for prices and where to buy.

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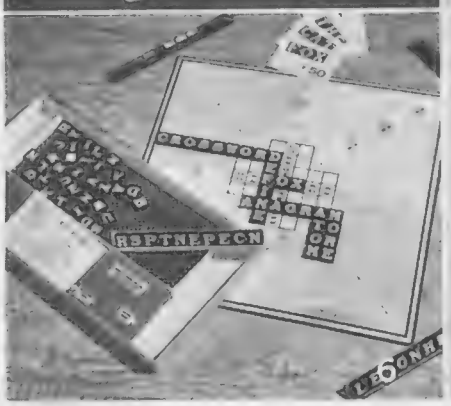

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PRESENTS WITH PERSONAL APPEAL

Christmas Shopping with Margaret Sharp

FOR the lucky people who have everything, you will be searching for out-of-the-ordinary luxuries which are not too heavy on your own Christmas budget.

1. For discriminating perfume lovers, there is the haunting, flowerlike fragrance of Chanel No. 22, so right for special evening occasions. Or a glass and metal heart-shaped lapel-fob perfume bottle in miniature complete with miniature glass-rod dropper.

2. For the well-groomed woman with a light heart and a taste for gadgets, a gilded metal musical-box compact, which tinkles "La Ronde" or Brahms's "Cradle Song," or Pond's Angel Face, solid compact, in its slim white and gold case.

3. For a lively-minded child who dotes on exact small-scale models of the things he sees around him, an officially approved replica of the Vauxhall Velox. Battery-driven, it will run forward or in reverse, and can be steered. The little push-by-hand steam-roller is a faithful copy of an Aveling-Barford diesel roller.

4. Sure to appeal to the man who follows the race meetings, a 36-in. square pure silk scarf, printed with a design of sixteen mounted jockeys, each wearing the authentic racing colours of a famous owner. Alternative choice, handsomely cased in pigskin is a slide rule which gives detailed recipes for fifty cocktails.

5. The perfect gift for the woman who already has everything, Helena Rubinstein's Stay-long lipstick in a gilt case with a handsome jewelled top.

6. For the woman with a taste for midget models, a Lilliputian Dunhill lighter, the photograph shows it actual size—which does its job as efficiently as its full-size counterparts and uses the minimum of handbag space.

7. For the girl who collects costume jewellery, a daisy-design Sculptida necklace. The metal chain and flower petals have an antique silver finish and the flower centre is a cloudy moonstone blue. Earrings and clips are made to match.

Turn to page 70 for prices and where to buy.

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TALKING OF BOOKS

by

TREVOR ALLEN

Illustration from Jacques Chegaray's "My Polynesia," a travelogue with a warning theme. *Below (centre)* Paul Gallico, author of "The Foolish Immortals"—an unusual story

FOR Christmas book-buying subjects like toys and the theatre find a warm place in our preferences, for most of us patronize both, as gifts or outings, over the festive season.

If we admire Cicely Courtneidge we'll want someone to enjoy her autobiography —**"Cicely"** (Hutchinson, 15s.)—for its gay photographs and likeable confidences. The girl, for example, being told she'd had her pocket money for the week and replying, "I know, Father, but twopence doesn't go far and I've got a hansom waiting." The young actress being sent a single forget-me-not on an enormous cushion by a millionaire's son who gradually steps up his bouquets until they're so large that the call-boy cannot get them through the door. The star of *Under The Counter* staggered when a crazy interloper suddenly strolls into a scene and stays there until police arrest him after curtain-fall. The woman-of-the-world advising: "A woman should never put herself on a pedestal, because a man is liable to leave her there." I'd choose this book for its close-ups of stage friends and frank human appeal.

Bing Crosby's **"Call Me Lucky"** (Muller, 10s. 6d.) has kindred qualities. He insists modestly on the luck, though his mother says: "Your luck has been my prayers I've asked the Poor Clare nuns to offer up for you." He certainly found the right sort of wife, for whenever his ego tempted him upstage she called him "The Bumptious Baritone" or "Ole Gravel Throat," and when he lectured the juniors, said: "You're foolin' the people, but you can't fool them, eh?" An admirably humorous life story of the idol who started by selling papers, milking cows, then crooning and bashing drums in a musical group called the Juicy Seven, with a lot about golf, racing, show pals—including, of course, Bob Hope!

The toy book is Lesley Gordon's **"Peepshow Into Paradise"** (Harrap, 25s.), a history of toys from earliest times, with scores of delightful drawings. Her approach is the right one. A study of toys, she says, is a study of fashions, manners, customs, for "within the cheerful confusion of the toy cupboard we find the world in miniature." The book is packed with information. I found it fascinating.

There's a good choice for those who like travel and the unusual. Juliette de Baïracli Levy first went to the gipsies to learn herbal lore. They accepted her as one of themselves, and **"As Gypsies Wander"** (Faber, 21s.) is an intimate account of them in England, Provence, Spain, Turkey, North Africa. In Granada, the heart of the gipsy world today, she even met one serving as a policeman. She writes of customs, (*Continued on page 76*)

PINNING THEM DOWN

NO one can complain that, in pinning them down, drama critic Kenneth Tynan turns his brilliant butterflies into drab moths. His jabs at the famous—mostly players, writers, painters, dancers and other exotics—are adroitly clever, perhaps too clever. Augustus John has become "the archetype of the picturesque and successful Bohemian sage, who has made his peace with society." The only domiciled Englishmen who remain wholly eccentric beyond middle-age are "those who go mad." Coward in cabaret is benign, though slightly flustered, "as a cardinal might be who had been asked to participate in a frenetic tribal rite." He "doses his sentences with pauses as you dose epileptics with drugs." It is Graham Greene's technical achievement to have "written on his nerves for so long without ever getting on ours."

A hundred victims quiver under his pen-stab in **"Persona Grata"** (Wingate, 21s.), with Cecil Beaton's fine camera portraits (example: Augustus John, *left*), for compensation—which makes this handsome quarto just the gift book for sophisticates, but only.

Christmas—1853

ILLUSTRATIONS BY *R. HODGSON*

STORY BY *JOHN W. HERBERT*

CHRISTMAS 100 years ago . . . was ever the Yuletide season more overflowing with Christian kindliness and pagan cheer than in the days when the young Victoria was Queen and Dickens in his prime? Was ever the Christmas spirit expressed more heartily in family festivity, robust wassailing, fun under the mistletoe and universal good will?

In those Christmastides of the early 1850's, the Victorians were still in the first romantic flush of Christmas rediscovered, a Christmas merry enough with old tradition but centring now more closely in the domestic hearth, and newly aglow with a warming, seasonable charity that thawed out the chill of poverty just as the flaming Yule log kept at bay the cold outside the plush-curtained parlour windows.

It makes a pretty picture, this Victorian family Christmas, with whiskered Papa, crinolined Mamma, aunts, uncles and a quiverful of little ones enjoying all the old Yuletide ritual in the holly-decked drawing-room of a solid South Kensington mansion, a villa in Clapham, or perhaps a snow-bound country house. But mark the novel centrepiece round which the jollity revolves, an ancient Yuletide emblem unknown in England before Victoria's time—the Christmas-tree!

Prince Albert, they say, introduced this evergreen—perhaps the crowning glory of all Yuletide decorations—from Germany: by doing so he earned the Christmas thanks of countless English folk.

For as it stood in the middle of the darkened parlour, topped by its fairy (wand and all), its candle-lit branches sparkling with tinsel and loaded down with presents, Albert's tree brought new wonder to the old Yuletide magic. And how tiny Georgina, and small Augustus and the rest, dancing

It is Christmas in the Victorian drawing-room one hundred years ago—mark the novel centrepiece—unknown in England before Queen Victoria's time—a surprise, sometimes even a shock! And there was merriment below stairs, too . . .

round it, must have clapped their hands and cried out in delight at its glittering beauty!

And then the family Christmas dinner, full of the same gusto and high spirits, one guesses, as that rollicking feast described by Dickens a few years earlier in his *Sketches by Boz*:

"Uncle George," he wrote, "tells stories, and carves poultry, and takes wine, and jokes with the children at the side table, and winks at the cousins who are making love, or being made love to . . . and when at last a stout servant staggers in with a gigantic pudding with a sprig of holly on the top, there is such a laughing and shouting . . . as can only be equalled by the applause by which the astonishing feat of pouring brandy into mince-pies is received by the younger visitors."

Other pictures of Victorian Christmas rites and junketings crowd in. Of merriment below stairs, for instance. As lively as a Cruikshank print in a Dickens' book is the well-staffed servants' hall in which, by Christmas licence, a pretty housemaid is being kissed under the mistletoe by a footman, knee-breeched and white stockinged, while the portly butler, the housekeeper and the rest of the company—including, of course, an impudent page-boy—look gleefully on. Or it may be of a snowy country scene at dusk, with half-a-dozen stalwart farm-workers dragging through a clearing in the woods, towards the Hall whose lighted windows shine out into the gloom, a great Yule log for burning in the Squire's wide fireplace.

Again, the scene may be of an oak-panelled college dining-hall at Oxford where, past long lines of gowned undergraduates standing at their tables, solemnly stalks a steward bearing towards the high table that time-honoured Yuletide speciality of the college—the Boar's Head. And as the servitor moves up the hall there rings out, echoing to the rafters, the traditional Boar's Head Carol (originally in Latin):

> The Boar's Head in hand bear I,
> Bedeck'd with bays and rosemary;
> And I pray you, my masters, be merry.

Then there were the mummers, still occasionally to be seen in the Victorian streets 100 years ago, performing the curious Christmas revels that had survived from mediæval times. Strangely garbed and grotesquely masked, they would enact some old legend like St. George and the Dragon, these two characters being supported by

Father Christmas bearing the holly bough and the wassail bowl, the Grand Turk with his scimitar, the Doctor with his outsize box of pills, and perhaps a mitred Bishop. To the sound of drums and music these merry masqueraders would parade the streets and claim the Christmas privilege of entry to the houses on their way.

BUT in the crowded, gaslit thoroughfares of London it was not the mummers (then almost extinct in the South of England), but the waits who enlivened the Christmastide nights of the 1850's, with their popular tunes played on fiddle, flute and trumpet. Like the mummers, they were relics of the Middle Ages, being descendants of wandering minstrels or Court pages—but they, too, were soon to disappear, leaving only the carol-singers, beloved of the Victorians, to spread the old Christmas message in well-known word and melody.

Of course, small boys in search of coppers went their carolling rounds in city streets—with a halting, hackneyed repertoire—then as now. But in the country places, in the Christmas Eve darkness and the crisp light of Christmas morning, old carols could be heard that even then were becoming unfamiliar and since have been forgotten. Some, admittedly, were not particularly religious. There was that strange lay sung on Christmas morning in Yorkshire by children carrying with them a Christmas-tree :

> Well-a-day ! well-a-day !
> Christmas too soon goes away,
> Then your gooding we do pray,
> For the good time will not stay—
> We are not beggars from door to door,
> But neighbours' children known before.

But the real Yuletide carol scene of 100 years ago is of a lantern-lit group of village choristers, well muffled against the winter night's cold, singing in fine harmony the old traditional hymns of Christmas known to all, like " God rest you merry, gentlemen."

Meanwhile, behind the close-drawn curtains, within the cosy lighted rooms, the fun goes on. Christmas dinner over, the joys of the Christmas-tree temporarily spent, the party might turn to dancing. No longer is the pavan, the saraband or the gavot *de rigueur* ; the couples now foot it in a quadrille or whirl and charge around the floor in a polka or galope, with the fiddlers fiddling like mad.

Or perhaps the old game of Snapdragon is called for, that mirth-provoking sport in which, a bowlful of raisins having been steeped in brandy and ignited, the players have to plunge their hands through the flames and grasp some of the fruit. And when the lights are out and the parlour is illuminated only by the blue flames of the brandy, the game is enhanced by an attractive eeriness.

When this palls, there are cards, or hilarious Blind Man's Buff, or Puss in the Corner; or Charades, or maybe Questions and Commands, a game where quick wits are needed and failure to answer instantly the questioner's poser may earn a blackened face or some other awkward penalty.

So went the Christmas revelry of 100 years ago. And Boxing-day might bring even a more exciting diversion—a visit to the pantomime. London's theatres at Christmas, 1853, offered a feast of seasonable fun. There was a grand pantomime and harlequinade at Drury Lane; the Princess's Theatre presented *Harlequin and the Miller and his Men;* at the Adelphi there was a fairy-tale called *Fairy Nip and the Spirit Bride*; at the Lyceum a "new original fairy extravaganza"; and at Astley's Amphitheatre a rip-roaring panto, *Billy Button's Journey to Brentford.*

YES, the Yuletide celebrations of these Victorians were hearty. But note the hint in a Christmas news-sheet of 1853 that, then as now, a minor spectre haunted the Christmas feast—dyspepsia!

"Christmas, no doubt, is a jolly time," ran a *Times* advertisement. "The feast of reason and the flow of soul are triumphant, but it is too often marred by unwise indulgences and epicurean sacrifices." The puff went on to recommend as a cure for Christmas stomach-ache a certain proprietary pill.

It was now, in these Christmases of the 1850's, that a new Yuletide missive began to swell the postman's bag and drop through the family letter-box alongside the Christmas letters. The Christmas card, less than a decade old, was conveying the ancient seasonable wishes in a novel way and bringing fresh colour to the Christmas mantelpieces of the early Victorians.

Doggerel their verse may have been, and unsophisticated their scenes of children playing in the snow, receiving gifts from Santa Claus or hailing the arrival of the plum-pudding—but who cared, in the happy turmoil of Christmastide a century ago, about the artistic side of these warm-hearted messages?

But hark back a few years to the first Christmas card of all (designed by a Royal Academician in the 1840's): here is told, with art and insight, the whole romantic story of Christmas in those days.

From the card's centre panel a family looks out, with glasses raised in quiet toasting of Christmas (perhaps some Yuletide toastings in this age of Dickens *could* have been more convivial!), to present a tableau that might be labelled "Domestic Felicity." And in two flanking panels are scenes of the hungry being fed and the naked clothed—tableaux whose name is surely "Charity."

Among the great army of the Victorian poor there were, a century ago, plenty who enjoyed precious little Christmas cheer; but at this kindly season the spirit of (*Continued on page 76*)

The spirit of compassion reached out even to the paupers who haunted the gas-lit streets and alleys, and enjoyed precious little Christmas cheer otherwise

Party Games

by

JOANNA LACEY DREW

BRIGHT decorations, the traditional holly and mistletoe, good food and drink, are only part of the preparations for Christmas. Radio and television will have arranged programmes for our entertainment, so that all we need do is stretch out a lazy hand and press the button. . . .

But being a looker-on can be so boring. Do we really want to enjoy ourselves passively? Why not take a more active part in this business of celebrating Christmas, and make our own pleasures. Why not invite our friends and neighbours to join us, and do our own singing, our own dancing; play our own games.

All successful parties have an air of spontaneity, and careful planning in advance is absolutely necessary. A really impromptu "do" sometimes comes off, but generally it is a dismal affair, full of politely suppressed yawns and terrible silences. Get the party going from the start with an introduction game.

One of the gayest parties I ever attended started off at the front door, where each arrival, duly greeted and with outdoor clothes removed, had a label pinned to his or her back, where everybody except the wearer could see it. The label bore the name of a famous character in history or literature. It was then the business of the wearer to discover by means of discreetly worded questions who the character was.

SO stimulate your visitor with a preliminary drink, push him into the party room, and leave events to eventuate. At the party I attended most of the guests were unknown to each other. The *Introduction Game* dealt hilariously with that situation.

Another good warming-up game is a sing-song, with the aid of a piano or gramophone. Start it off with a chorus song, and get everybody to join *loudly* in the chorus. Voices don't matter; the main thing is to make a lot of noise. There 's nothing like it for destroying inhibitions. Destruction generally is fun, especially when it 's backed with the comfortable feeling that nothing is really going to be damaged! Good old-fashioned games like Postman's Knock, Kiss in the Ring and Musical Chairs are great destroyers of dignity. And a good thing too!

In the destructive class comes *The Queen of Siam*, which can be played by any number over seven: three women and four men. There should always be one odd man. All the men bar the odd man are shepherded into another room. Two rows of chairs are then placed facing each other, leaving a corridor wide enough to walk through between them. One chair is then set at the top of the corridor; this is to be the Queen's throne. The odd man, who is master of ceremonies, stands at the side of the empty throne. The women sit facing each other. Then the first victim is let in, and the master of ceremonies invites him to choose from the seated women the one he would most like to kiss. The lady of his choice becomes the queen, and is duly enthroned.

The remaining women extend their legs across the corridor, so as to form a series of hurdles. The "victim" is then blindfolded, and told that if he can successfully negotiate the hurdles of the crossed legs he can kiss the lady of his choice. Of course, the moment he is blindfolded the legs are removed—soundlessly, and the poor fellow stumbles his way across non-existent barriers. Nor is this all; for by the time he reaches the throne, the master of ceremonies has substituted himself for the Queen, and graciously allows himself to be embraced! A fur or a chiffon scarf helps the illusion.

The last victim becomes the next master of ceremonies, and so on through the lot. Human nature being what it is, you will find that each victim thoroughly enjoys victimising the next one!

NOT all games need be rowdy. I find it best to intersperse a few reflective games. For *Who 's Who?* you must ask each guest to bring a photograph of himself as a child. Mix all the photographs together, spread them out on a table, and invite the guests to identify them. Naturally, each guest must avoid choosing himself for identification!

For *What 's What?* you will need a number of paper bags and a thin cord. Fill each bag with a different spice or herb or aromatic fruit or berry. Pin the bags to the cord about 2 ft. apart, so that the smells don't conflict, and hang the cord up like a clothes-line. The game is to smell each bag and guess the contents. The best guesser gets a prize.

Scrambled Clichés is a fairly noisy game, but not really in the destructive class. For this, one player retires from the room, while the rest decide on a cliché. "Mustn't let the grass grow under our feet," for example. Each person is allotted one word of this, and when the player outside comes into the room, all call out their single word at the same moment. The player must try to unscramble the cliché.

And this is an observation game: Take a large tray and assemble on it a collection of small objects, as diverse as possible; safety (*Continued on page 71*)

PARTY DRESSES

WE are in the season of going places and of having people in. There may be occasions for a full-scale evening toilette and certainly some calling for the "little dress" which holds its own in places where other women's interpretation of "don't dress" often leaves one with the feeling that goes with having turned up in carpet slippers. In this selection of partygoers we have put the greatest emphasis on the kind of dress which is informal and practical and yet chic enough to defeat the carpet slipper complaint. The one full-dress exception is lovely enough, we feel, to need no alibi.

Our choice may help you to find the dress that will put you looking your best into the Christmas picture

Far left : Glittering embroidery cascading over a bodice and skirt of diaphanous chiffon. A sheer white gown delicate and scintillating enough for a Christmas fairy. Julian Rose at Peter Jones, London. About thirty-eight guineas

Left centre : Taffeta quilted with silver thread. Separates to wear as an evening dress or divide to team the ballet-length skirt with a blouse. Blouse five guineas. Skirt seven guineas. Eric Hart at Fenwicks of Bond Street

Below left : For occasions formal and otherwise a woven silver mesh, svelte and simple with its long, fluttering bow ends in contrasting black. Polly Peck at Norman Howard, Bond Street. About twelve-and-a-half guineas

Below centre : Ingenue, crisp and adorable in black and white check taffeta with bands of black outlined with frills of white anglaise. A swishing skirt and demure buttoned bodice. Susan Small at Peter Robinson. About ten guineas

Sophistication in silver and black brocade. A cocktail suit by Frederick Starke at Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge. About twenty-seven guineas. Accessory jewellery from Bourne and Hollingsworth. Photographs by Michael Williams

Time to

OF course, Christmas preparations are the chief preoccupation of the moment, with presents to buy, parties to arrange and catering to be organised. But if you are to grace the Christmas proceedings—and who can resist the spell of this romantic of all seasons ?—time must be set aside for beautifying.

Consider a visit to a beauty salon in your Christmas itinerary. To visitors from out of town, coming to London for a shopping expedition, this is a unique opportunity to get professional advice and treatment at one of the London beauty salons. No matter if it is even a month before Christmas. A facial treatment, followed up with three or four weeks' supporting home programme, will find you looking your best when the party season gets going.

If a visit to a beauty salon is out of the question, some kind of special home treatment is the next best thing. The most effective home treatments are on the sure-but-slow principle, so that a course of treatment initiated now will be producing results by Christmas. For the complexion that has lost its youthful firmness of contour, there is Helena Rubinstein's new Contour Lift Film. Used as a night cream, and beneath the day foundation, it works the clock round against the tell-tale marks of time—drooping contours and wrinkling necklines.

A four weeks' course of Maria Hornes' new Ego-syl treatment will have a rejuvenating effect upon the tired complexion. Lines and wrinkles appear only when the skin begins to lose its youthful suppleness. By restoring the elasticity to an ageing skin, this cream smooths out lines and brings the complexion back to firmness.

The adolescent with a typically spotty complexion can do much to improve it in the weeks between now and Christmas. Regular use of Innoxa Solution 41 will correct the over-greasiness, refine the pores and discourage the spots of acne. Four weeks' faithful care will see the complexion greatly improved in texture and less susceptible to spots. These home treatments can be

Beautify . . . . . by CHRYSIS

considered as a build-up for the occasion, when a special pre-party treatment will give an extra sparkle to the appearance.

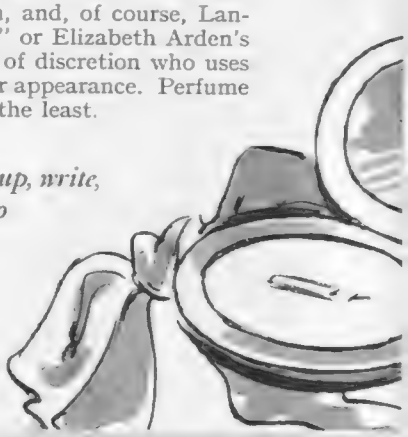
Innoxa, who specialize in the problems of the disturbed complexion, prescribe this pre-party ritual for the blemished skin. First thoroughly cleanse the face and neck with Complexion Milk and dry with a tissue. Apply Innoxa White Mask evenly and leave on for about ten minutes while lying down perfectly relaxed. Remove the mask with cold water, dry and wipe over with toning lotion.

Helena Rubinstein has devised a special pre-party treatment for the rather older woman. Cleanse the face and neck with Waterlily Cleansing Cream and apply Youthifying Herbal Mask to the entire face and throat. Pads of cotton wool, soaked with Anti-Wrinkle Lotion, are placed over the eyes. Relax for a full twenty minutes to give the mask time to lighten and freshen the skin. Remove the mask with a towel wrung out in fairly warm water, then pat in Skin Toning Lotion to brace the skin and leave it ready for make-up.

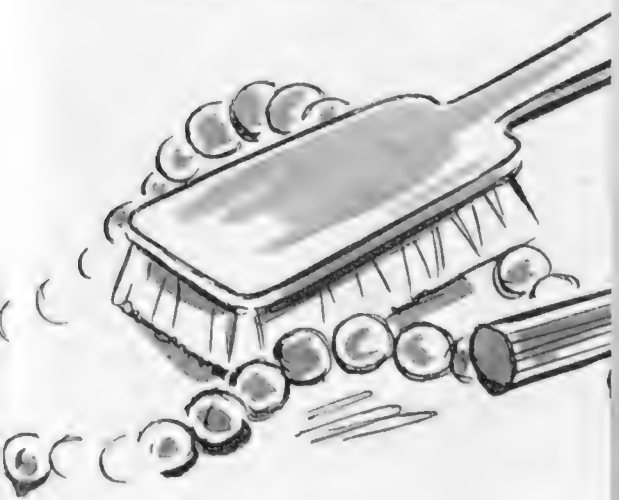
A touch of perfume will give a special cachet to your party ensemble. A perfume has its best effect when its character is in tune with the occasion. The sweet, nostalgic fragrance of lavender, of which Potter and Moore's Mitcham Lavender is, by tradition, one of the most respected, is exactly right for informal or family occasions. Or the flower based perfumes, like Goya's Pink Mimosa or Heather, by the same perfumer, are also lovely to wear.

For formal occasions, one goes to the more sophisticated perfumes. Steiner's fascinating "Mink" asks to be worn with your most ravishing ball gown, and, of course, Lancôme's subtle and haunting "Magie" or Elizabeth Arden's "Blue Grass" are for every woman of discretion who uses perfume as a final touch of chic to her appearance. Perfume is the last touch, but by no means the least.

For advice on your personal make-up, write, enclosing a stamped envelope, to Chrysis, "Britannia and Eve," Ingram House, 195 Strand, W.C.2



Elizabeth Arden has created this hair-style which is as lovely for evening wear as it is practical for daytime



Teens and Toddlers

MATERIALS REQUIRED

The set of which the waistcoat is shown above and the bolero in the sketch below is worked in Lister's Lavenda Double Crepe on No. 8 needles, at a tension of 5½ stitches and 7 rows to one inch. The waistcoat takes 4 oz. wool and measures 12 in. long at the centre back and 24 ins. round the chest. The bolero takes 5 oz., a circular needle No. 8 and a pair of No. 8 needles. It is 13 ins. long at centre back and 24 ins. round the chest. The flowers are embroidered after knitting

Toddler's Twin-set

THE BOLERO: With No. 8 needles cast on 63 sts. and work as instructions given for back of waistcoat.

LEFT FRONT

Cast on 22 sts., p. 1 row.

2nd row.—* K. 1, p. 1 ; rep. from * to last st., inc. in last st.

3rd row.—Inc. in 1st st., p. to end.

4th row.—K. 7, * p. 1, k. 7 ; rep. from * to last st., inc. Continue in pattern, inc. at this edge until there are 31 sts. on needle, then without shaping until work measures 7 ins. Work armhole and front slope shapings as instructions given for left front of waistcoat.

RIGHT FRONT

Cast on 22 sts., p. 1 row.

2nd row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 1, * p. 1 ; k. 1 ; rep. from * to end of row.

3rd row.—P. to last st., inc.

4th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 7, * p. 1, k. 7 ; rep. from * to end of row. Continue in pattern, inc. at this edge until there are 31 sts. on needle, then without shaping until work measures 7 ins. Continue as right front of waistcoat.

SLEEVES

Cast on 36 sts. and work 2 rows in st.st.

Next row.—K. 1, * m. 1, k. 2 tog. ; rep. from * to last st. K. 1. Work 3 rows in st.st.

Next row.—Fold at row of holes and knit next row together with cast on edge

(Continued on page 74)

Teenage Sweater

BACK

**With No. 13 needles, cast on 126 sts. and work in rib as follows :

1st row.—*K. 2, p. 1 ; rep. from * to end of row.

2nd row.—*K. 1, p. 2 ; rep. from * to end of row.

Rep. the last two rows until work measures 3 ins. Change to No. 11 needles, continue in st.st., inc. 1 st. at both ends of the 7th and every following 8th row until there are 144 sts. Continue without shaping until work measures 14½ ins. Cast off 8 sts. at the beg. of the next 2 rows. Then cast on 34 sts. at the beg. of the next two rows. Then work in the Fair Isle patt. as follows change to No. 10 needles.

N.B.—When working the Fair Isle patt., leave wool not in use lying loosely at back of work.

1st row.—K. 1M, * 3M., 1C. ; rep. from * ending with 3M.

2nd row.—P. 1M., 1C., * 3M., 1C. rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

3rd row.—K. in M.

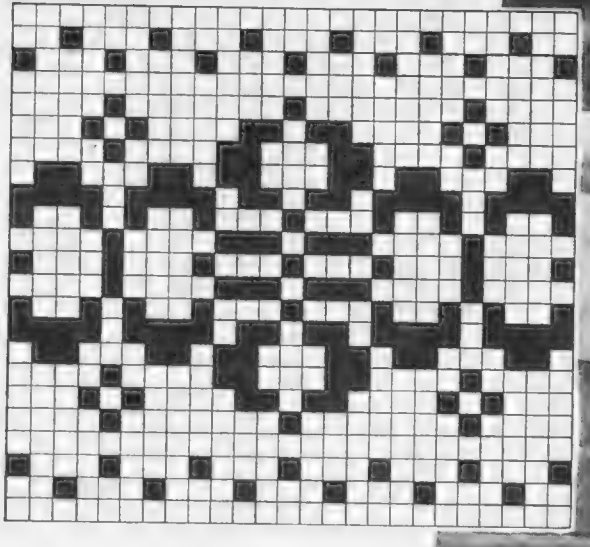
4th row.—P. 1M., 1C. ; * 7M., 1C. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

5th row.—K. 2M., * 1M., 1C., 4M., 2C., 1M., 2C., 4M., 1C. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

6th row.—P. 1M., 1C., * 4M., 2C., 3M., 2C., 4M., 1C. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

7th row.—K. 2M., * 2M., 2C., 1M., 2C., 3M., 2C., 1M., 2C., 1M. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M. *(Continued on page 74)*

Twin set bolero and waistcoat for a five-year-old, quick to knit in double crepe wool—and a teenager's sweater with the fashionable bulky look



MATERIALS FOR SWEATER
You will need 9 oz. Sirdar Majestic 3-ply wool in the main shade (referred to as M. in the instructions) and 1 oz. of the same wool in a contrasting shade for the Fair Isle pattern (referred to as C. in the instructions). It is worked on No. 11 and No. 13 needles at a tension of 8 stitches to 1 in., measured over the stocking stitch on No. 11 needles. The instructions are for a loose-fitting sweater for a 34-in. bust

So Now We Move . . .

by

KATHERINE BETTS

"JAM tomorrow but never jam today," I muttered to myself as the wallpaper salesman shook his head regretfully. Except for a deep saffron horror that he hastily turned over, and a dreary yellowish fawn with blisters he hadn't a thing to show in response to my request for: "A sunshine yellow with perhaps a touch of white."

In next year's pattern book, he assured me, there were one or two yellows, but they wouldn't be out till after Christmas. Such a pity I wanted it now. There was a design just like I'd described some three years ago, too. . . . His voice died away.

I began automatically to ask *why* yellow was so shunned; were there technical difficulties? But my performance was rather half-hearted. On principle I believe in registering protests, in expressing preferences and in trying to find out the reason for not being catered for. Unfortunately, after three months battling to get our new home-to-be ready for habitation, time has become everything. Mentally I scrapped one colour scheme, substituted another. . . .

We thought that, when after almost a year's search and four eleventh-hour disappointments, we finally found ourselves the proud possessors of a cottage and four acres it would only be a matter of weeks before we were "in."

Everybody had told us gloomy tales of their experiences with alterations and decorations, but though we added a couple of weeks on to the three estimated by our surveyor, we didn't believe that with no licence to obtain and shops overflowing with equipment it was going to be *that* difficult. After all, our needs were quite modest. We have learned since!

First of all, it never occurred to us that builders would spend half a day going over a house with a view to estimating for several hundreds of pounds' worth of work, and then do nothing, just nothing at all about it. Not a word, not a message, just blank indifference.

In the end we unearthed a firm, in a neighbouring small town and halfway across the county from the cottage, who took some interest and who were prepared to start at the word "go." At least, they could undertake the fitting of new stoves; the tidying up of the plumbing; putting in a window; altering a couple of doors; cupboards. Decorations? No. The summer is the wrong time to get anything of that sort done by firms of any size.

Happily our diligent study of the county paper was rewarded by the discovery of two experienced freelances who actually *wanted* to do painting and paper-hanging. Preliminaries were swiftly settled and at the prospect of two teams on the job, our spirits rose.

BUT selecting a cooker, a sink unit and etceteras were one thing. Getting them delivered another. Day after day the start was postponed as some vital piece of equipment—a boiler, radiators, the modern fire—didn't arrive. The freelances, promising to come back when the coast was clear for them, went off to another job and we wondered miserably whether we had been foolhardy in giving notice to our landlord and fixing a date for moving.

Taking matters into his own hands the senior partner became known in every builders' merchant for miles round as he chased up the missing pieces. At last the day came when he cheerfully left home at 7.15 a.m. in order to act as guide to the lorry-load of skilled workers who were now going to make up for lost time.

At the yard he was met by a distracted figure announcing that three funerals had loomed up and wrecked his plans: "Quiet as can be all last week," confided our builder friend, "not a whisper of anything coming up. Then during the weekend I wasn't out of my blacks. (*Continued on page* 69)

A previous article described our contributor's hunt for her dream cottage and final success. Between finding the cottage and actually moving in much had to be done

Then give three curious cheers

Curiously attractive are the heavy, corded weaves of the Border Counties. North go Sanderson and bring them back. Curious how for centuries certain families in Milan and Venice have woven damasks and brocades of a brilliancy which . . . South go Sanderson. You could do the same if you had the time, the patience, the constitution, the secret knowledge, the import licences, the travel allowances and the languages. It may be, at the end of twenty years, you'd have found a few of the treasures which await you *now* at Berners Street.

Unless you think to hang silken fabrics from your walls (as some proud lords and prouder princes do) you will also be interested to know that . . .

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A light-hearted reminiscence

by NINA WARNER HOOKE

EVERY one of us, I dare say, is liable to some form of the regretful hankering for past joys which we call nostalgia. A phrase, a snatch of music, a snapshot in a family album, a chance meeting, a yellowing letter brought to light from the back of a bureau—any one of these things has power to awaken memories so vivid that, in a flash, we re-live the scene in which it played a part.

All our senses integrate to complete the act of translation. We smell the scent of hay and roses on a summer evening. We hear the waves lapping on the sands and the echo of forgotten laughter. We taste the tartness of a pilfered apple, feel the floor under our waltzing feet and the bliss and torment of first love. Our hearts seem to miss a beat in the intense reality of the moment.

It is rational and inevitable that the majority of such moments are associated with childhood or early youth, since for most of us this was the golden, the carefree time, eternally shrined in rapture. The incidence varies with the susceptibility of the subject. For some it occurs more often and more easily than for others. Our present state of mind has some influence. If we are unhappy, depressed or bored, we are naturally more responsive, readier to seek escape from the present into the past and therefore more liable to facilitate the process.

For me, however, there is one unfailing factor, independent of others, which can touch off the delicate mechanism as automatically as the pressing of a starter button awakes a motor. I have only to see on a bookshelf one of those well-thumbed volumes which are generically termed "historical romances" and at once the wizardry is set in motion. Walls dissolve about me. My outward form may appear to be standing where it was, staring blankly into space, but I myself, the real intrinsic I, am no longer there but miles away, in a different world.

I am fifteen years old, roaming the Kentish lanes in the days of powdered wigs and ruffles, of fast coaches and high stakes—the days when villains were double-dyed, when heroines were fair and proud, when a mocking word led to a blow, a blow to a challenge, a challenge to a chase through the night on fast blood horses, and the chase inevitably to a meeting on the windy heath at dawn or on the sanded floor of a taproom, when honour was satisfied by a pistol shot or the flash of a rapier.

My recollection of these stirring pages is of a convention, a pattern of behaviour and treatment, that never varied, that

(*Continued on page* 68)

"I am fifteen years old again, roaming the Kentish lanes in the days of powdered wigs and ruffles, when heroines were fair and proud . . ."

Helping the Christmas Pudding

We are out of the short supply era and Christmas can be itself again with the joys of...

Ampler Fare

by JANET DARBY

THE other day I was introduced to an American couple who were visiting England for the first time, and they were full of pleasant surprise. It was all so different from what they had expected. Kind friends had warned them that we were standoffish; that taxi-drivers were rude; and that food was scarce and bad. Well, we weren't; the taxi-drivers weren't; while as for the food. . . . "Honestly," they told me earnestly, "we couldn't have eaten better anywhere, and we've travelled plenty! The roast beef!" they said ecstatically, and fell into a happy and well-fed silence.

I thought, as I left them to their pleasant dreams, that this is a great discovery, and it is time we made it, too. We are out of the short supply era. We can go into well-stocked shops, and buy anything we want. We don't have to curry favour with the butcher to get an extra lamb chop, and we don't have to stand meekly in queues and present cards in order to receive a meagre ration. So let's inaugurate this era of plenty by making it a real Christmas.

I REALIZE that after fourteen years of making do with substitutes it's going to need a conscious effort to be generous to ourselves, but isn't it a joy to think that this year, at last, we can give ourselves the pleasure of being bountiful, not merely in thought, but in very deed.

The season of goodwill can make a good start with the preparations for the feast of Christmas. Put economy on your list of New Year resolutions if you like, but give yourself the tonic of a really lavish holiday first.

Double-stuff the turkey; chestnut stuffing for the neck, rich sausage forcemeat for the body. Here are the recipes. I make no apologies for the quantities specified. All the ingredients are readily obtainable, and Christmas can be itself again, at long last.

Sausage forcemeat (characters in the order of their appearance, so to speak):

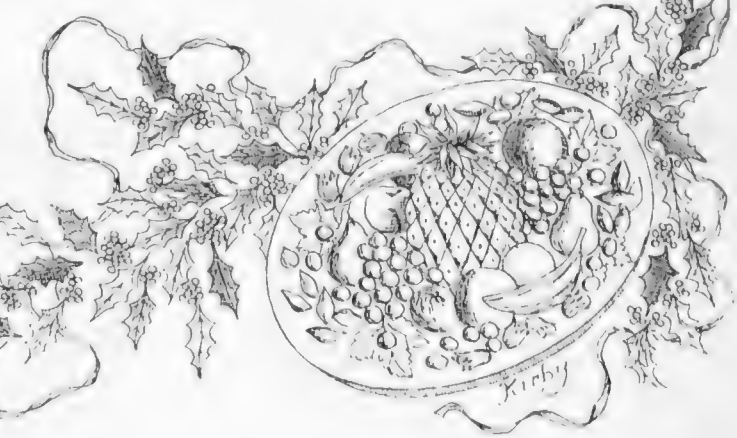
½ lb. breadcrumbs
¼ oz. suet
2 oz. cooked ham
1½ lb. best pork sausage-meat
1 tablespoon parsley
Rind of half a lemon
Pinch of mixed herbs
Pepper and salt
2 eggs

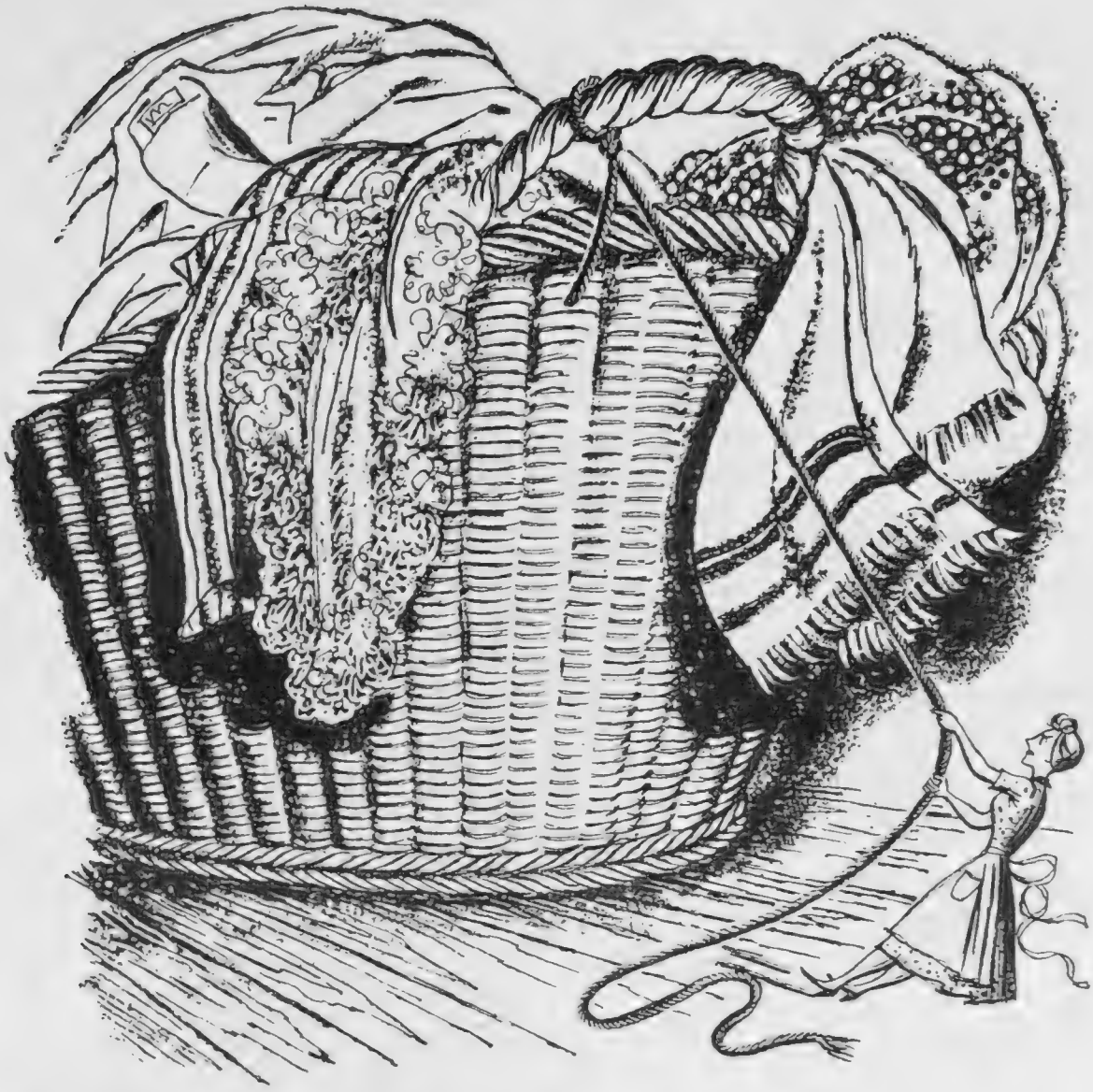
Put the breadcrumbs in a basin. Chop the suet and the ham finely, then add, together with the sausage-meat. Next, the parsley, lemon-rind, mixed herbs and seasoning. Beat the eggs well, then mix all together to make a moist yet firm stuffing.

For the **Chestnut stuffing** you will need:

1 lb. chestnuts
½ pint good beef stock
1 oz. butter
Grated rind of half a lemon
1 teaspoon parsley
1 teaspoon sugar
¼ lb. breadcrumbs
1 egg
¼ lb. fat ham
Pepper and salt

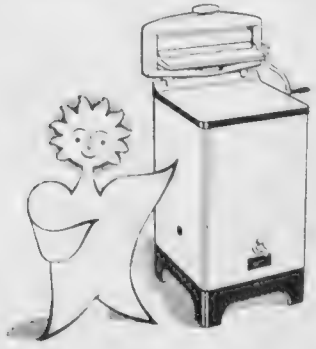
Put the chestnuts into cold water and bring to the boil, then skin them quickly, removing also the inner skin. This will come away easily while the nuts are warm. Now stew the naked nuts in the stock until all the liquid is absorbed. If you use a pressure (*Continued on page 72*)





Is it 'Monday morning' all the week with you?

Monday morning—washing morning—does it spread over the whole week with you? You know how the stuff piles up—mountains of dirty linen—your hands seem always in seas of suds, rubbing and scrubbing. Why put up with it any longer? Mr. Therm will help you out with both the washing and the drying—Mr. Therm makes home laundry EASY.



The new gas washing machines will do the week's wash in next to no time and whilst you are doing other jobs. And a drying cabinet will dry it all in less than an hour ready for ironing. At other times, the drying cabinet can serve as an airing cupboard.

GAS *WASHING MACHINES*

make home laundry easy

For demonstration and details of easy terms, call at your gas showroom.

Issued by the Gas Council

Return Of A Stranger (*Continued from page 23*)

"No Mau Mau here." said Komaki and went out.

He heard the sound of a car. Perhaps somebody was coming to talk to him. During his four years' absence he had quite forgotten how lonely you could be in the Kenya Highlands. The car stopped outside the house, he heard Komaki's voice, the door opened and Nancy Bulmer came in.

"Bill," she said, "I heard you were back. You chose the right moment, I must say."

"I always do," he said. "Have a drink."

His voice wasn't as detached as he would have wished it to be. They were both above medium height, she at the first glance taller than he. They both had blue eyes and there the resemblance ended; for he was the continuously smiling, easygoing man, whereas she, notwithstanding her smile, rather a serious person. Nancy and her husband settled in Kenya long after Bill. Frank, the husband, died after Bill left Kenya and he hadn't seen Nancy since.

"You haven't changed," she now said.

"Nor have you. As beautiful and young as ever."

He went on to the veranda.

"You shouldn't stand there," said Nancy, who had followed him.

"I won't catch cold."

"You know I don't mean that. Anybody could shoot you. One can hide so easily behind those trees." She pointed at a thick clump of thorn trees facing the house.

"Do look after yourself, Bill. Look at this." She took a revolver from her pocket. "Do you suppose I like carrying this?"

"The emergency suits you," he said as he saw her to her car. "I never saw you look so beautiful."

HE was in the blackout in Piccadilly and abruptly he awoke. The moonlight was on the wall. He sat up and listened. Nothing, he said to himself. He lay back and as he was ready to doze off he heard a sound again. He mustn't be stupid; and then he heard footsteps. They weren't far. He jumped out of bed, opened the french window and looked round on the veranda.

It must have been a leopard, he decided. There were plenty of them. Just as he was going to fall asleep it seemed to him that he heard voices coming from the direction of the servants' huts.

"Did you hear any noise in the night?" he asked Komaki when he came to call him.

"Nothing, *bwana*," said Komaki.

"It sounded as if it came from the huts."

"I would have heard it."

"Of course you would have." He got out of bed. "Komaki, it might have been a leopard."

"One took a sheep a week ago."

"Undoubtedly." The last thing he wanted Komaki to think was that he had Mau Mau in mind.

In the afternoon he drove to Nancy's farm. It had been his custom in the old days to take a rifle with him wherever he motored. Then it was a matter of meeting, say, a rhinoceros on the road: now he left it behind to show Nancy she exaggerated. She lived in a house built of cedar wood. A cedar forest was at the back of it running towards the slopes of the Aberdares. The grass before the house was ferociously green. Two Sealyhams came yapping from the house, and Bill saw a Masai with a rifle on his shoulder and a lance in his hand coming out from behind the garage. The bodyguard, he smiled.

"I always said," he remarked, "that this house should have overlooked the Wiltshire Downs." He looked out through the window. "In a sense it almost does."

"I wish it were as safe," said Nancy.

"Let's leave safety. I should love to see your children."

"After tea," she said, and after tea the children were called in. They were twins, seven years old, both boys and not at all shy. Eventually the twins decided to hide, so Bill was sent into the next room which was Nancy's office. Then he heard a shot so near that it seemed to him it had been fired in the next room. He rushed in.

"Not yet," said one of the twins who was trying to get unsuccessfully into a chest of drawers.

"He's jus' Nosey Parker," complained the other twin.

"Nancy, what was that?" asked Bill, curiously relieved.

"Wild dogs, I suppose," said Nancy. "They come near the sheep and the Masai fire at them and miss them. But Bill, why did you rush in."

"Because he's Nosey Parker," said the twins, "and wanted to know where we was hiding."

"That's it," said Bill and sat down. It was only after the children had left the room that it occurred to him that he had disappointed them.

"Nancy," he said as he was leaving, "I was a brute to the children. Tomorrow is the fifth of November, Guy Fawkes' Day. I'm going to make a guy for your children."

"You are kind," said Nancy. "They'll enjoy that."

THE headlights of his car suddenly picked out three figures on the road. He was near his farm. They rapidly merged with the undergrowth on the side of the road. He shrugged his shoulders. As the car reached the foot of the ridge he saw a leopard disappearing in the direction of the clump of trees facing the house. He reached the house and ran to his office where he kept his rifle. He took the rifle, went to the clump of trees, shone his torch, saw nothing; waited a little, then returned to the house. He threw the rifle on the sofa in the sitting-room and poured himself out a drink. Shortly after he shouted for Komaki.

"I saw a leopard go into those trees," he said, "but I couldn't find it."

"Plenty of leopards," said Komaki.

"Komaki," Bill exclaimed, "what's happened to your hand?"

"Hammer," said Komaki. "Hit my hand instead of the nail."

"You were always a bit clumsy. Show me your hand. Not too bad. Wait, I'll give you two aspirins."

He went to his bedroom, fetched the two aspirins, gave them to Komaki, told him to put the injured hand in cold water and had another drink.

After dinner he went to the sitting-room and read for a while. Once he looked up from his book: the rifle wasn't on the sofa. Probably Komaki had taken it to the office. He might be a clumsy fellow but was certainly tidy. In the morning Bill saw the rifle on the sofa in the sitting-room. The cushions of the sofa must have hidden it from his view the night before.

He ate a light luncheon served by Komaki who told him his hand was better. The rifle still lay on the sofa. He wished he didn't have to make a guy, Guy Fawkes' Day or no Guy Fawkes' Day, in the heavy afternoon heat. But he didn't want to let the children down a second time.

AS it often happened to him he became enthusiastic after he began. He found an old pair of corduroy trousers, stuffed the legs with straw, then he stuffed an old shirt with straw, and put straw inside the sleeves, too. When he looked at the guy it appeared almost human. He opened the french window, put a chair next to the window and seated the guy on it.

"Wonderful," he exclaimed and fetched a newspaper and put it on the guy's crossed knee.

"Mr. Haytor asleep after luncheon in a chair," he said, and strolled into the garden. He sat down on the wall surrounding the compound. Shortly after he heard the sound of a car.

Nancy came out through the door of the veranda, evidently looking for him. She stopped, stared in the direction of the clump of trees, and pleased because she had come, Bill didn't call out to her. To his amused surprise she caught sight of the guy in the chair and moved towards it. Bill laughed.

"Nancy," he called, "that's not me."

"Good gracious," she said bewildered. "But who's that?"

"The guy I made for your children. Come here and sit with me."

"For a moment," she said, "I really thought it was you. How very clever."

He went to the sitting-room to fetch drinks. He glanced at the sofa: the rifle wasn't there. He took out the drinks.

"I do compliment you on the guy," said Nancy. "The children will be in ecstasy."

"Bamboozled even you. I'm rather proud of myself."

"Bill," she cried and he looked surprised at her. "Bill," she said now almost in a whisper, "there's somebody in those trees."

"Probably a leopard. The one of last night. Saw it. . . ." She had jumped off the wall and pulled him down with her.

"Somebody is in there," she said and drew her revolver.

"Come, come," began Bill, then became silent. The undergrowth surrounding the clump of trees moved and slowly Komaki crawled out. It's only Komaki, Bill wanted to say. Komaki was carrying the rifle. "Don't move," whispered Nancy. Komaki stood up. He was in no hurry and took a deliberate step forward, then stopped. Bill could see but his left profile. He wanted to call to him and ask him what it was all about.

However, Komaki's expression held him back. With a sudden flash that tore off the years Bill saw a picture in a book he had read as a little boy. It was the picture of the cannibal who with a poisoned arrow attempted to kill the hero of the book. It was no longer the face of his trusted old servant. Komaki lifted the rifle and his face was now completely the face in the book. He aimed and Bill and Nancy half rose. Bill hadn't the faintest idea at what Komaki could be aiming. Besides he was too surprised by the expression on his face.

KOMAKI fired twice. The first shot smashed the glass of the open french window, the second hit the guy in the chest. Bill grabbed the revolver from Nancy and ran towards the veranda, and before Komaki could turn round he leaped on him. Komaki fell, the rifle fell a little farther and when he tried to struggle he recognized Bill. He ceased struggling.

"So you thought you killed me," shouted Bill. Komaki didn't answer. "Oh, Nancy, what a fool I was." He felt terribly tired.

"Just look at his hand," said Nancy pointing at the cut. "Bill, imagine if you had been sitting there." Suddenly he remembered the Mau Mau oath-taking ceremony, the cutting of hands.

"Then there mightn't have been a guy for your children. Or the other way round. It's confusing."

"If he had killed you instead . . ." began Nancy and couldn't go on.

"Of course now I must ask you to marry me," said Bill, trying to laugh but not succeeding. "Come on, Komaki, we're going to the police." He turned to Nancy and wanted to ask her to wait for him till he came back. "Come with us, Nancy."

Komaki walked in front of them, Bill was carrying the rifle and Nancy lagged a little behind. When they reached her car she asked him to drive. Her eyes were large with fright. "But I am all right," he said without smiling.

He made Komaki sit beside him in the car. They drove in silence and now and then Bill gave the man who had been his servant for years a sidelong glance. There were odd seconds when he wanted to speak to him as you speak to a lost friend asking him why he has forsaken your friendship. As they were approaching the police station Komaki spoke: "*Bwana*," he asked, "how did you come back so quickly after I killed you?"

END

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FORD 'FIVE-STAR' MOTORING

Dear Charlotte (*Continued from page 30*)

my sweet, might I remark in passing, that there's not much use in your quite striking resemblance to one of Botticelli's angels unless you behave as *sich*."

"Why did I marry such a difficult man?" said Ursula, with her head on his shoulder.

"Why did I fall for a girl with a will of her own?" demanded Bartholomew. He kissed her fair head and added. "We'll go to a show together next Saturday. What d'you want to see?"

"Lots of things. Let's get the paper and look."

"All right." And when they had made their choice, he added comfortably:

"Don't forget about Charlotte, will you? Just drop ringing her up, and, if she rings you, be wildly busy."

"I can't, not suddenly, like that. It would have to be done awfully gradually. After all, Barty, you've nothing really against her."

"Only her charming desire to disrupt our marriage."

"Now that's really terribly unfair. You know it is."

"I'm afraid I don't agree. People who haven't made a success of their own marriages frequently dislike the sight of domestic bliss and do their damnedest to upset it. Well, she's not going to have the chance. That's all."

"It wasn't her fault her marriage crashed, and anyway *she* divorced *him*. I can't quite remember what happened, but I think he threw the furniture about and got drunk."

"So should I if I were married to Charlotte."

"Most men think she's awfully attractive. She's frightfully goodlooking and she wears the most wonderful clothes. . . ."

"Listen, Little Bear, if there is one subject of which I'm heartily sick and tired it is this constant recital of Charlotte's virtues. Therefore, may I ask you, with all the politeness in the world, to shut up?"

"It's time for the nine o'clock news," said Ursula.

AND that was that. But when on Tuesday morning, an hour after Bartholomew had departed for chambers, Charlotte rang up, everything began to be complicated.

"Hallo, darling. How are you?"

"Well, frightfully busy actually, Charlotte."

"Good heavens, why?"

"Oh—just odds and ends. There's rather a lot to do in the flat. We—we're going to see the Edith Evans show on Saturday."

"Oh, you'll love it. She's marvellous. Actually, I thought you'd been."

"No."

"I've seen it twice. Well, anyway, you don't sound so incredibly busy to me. Look, what I rang up about was this. I'm going to a marvellous party tomorrow night, with a couple of very bright boys in the R.A.F. and I thought it would be simply grand if you joined us."

"I'm awfully sorry, Charlotte, but I'm afraid I can't."

"Now look here, don't refuse the thing till you know more about it. It's a charity ball on behalf of. . . ."

"Honestly, Charlotte, I can't make it . . ."

"What? I missed that. We were both talking at once. Anyway, I've taken four tickets because the thing really is worth supporting. It's at. . . ."

"It's no use," interrupted Ursula. "I—I think we may be going to Mother's tomorrow evening. It's awfully sweet of you Charlotte; thank you so much all the same. I *must* fly now. Goodbye." And feeling very noble indeed, she rang off.

She had just finished ironing Barty's shirts, and was regarding them with an anxious pride, when the bell rang and she found Charlotte on the doorstep.

"Angel, I simply had to come and see what all this is about," said Charlotte. She was chic, slim and dark, and she made the auburn-haired Botticellian Ursula feel very unfinished indeed.

"How nice," said Ursula untruthfully, "do sit down. I'll just go and turn off my iron."

"Darling, you *have* gone all domestic, haven't you?" said Charlotte, and she strolled into the living-room, smiling a little.

Charlotte in her expensive black suit, her enchanting hat, photographed beautifully in shiny weeklies, where she was seen at fashionable weddings and society christenings.

Ursula, coming into the room, pushed the soft hair from her small face and said nervously: "I wish you'd let me know you were coming. I'm afraid there's nothing for tea. I never bother when I'm on my own."

"Very naughty of you; you *should* bother. But I can't stop to tea anyhow. I'm getting my hair done at four, and then I'm going to a cocktail party. About tomorrow night, darling. Listen, you simply must come. It's going to be marvellous. I mean, why on earth not? Don't tell me Barty's being difficult?"

"Barty's never difficult," said Ursula. "Only, you see, I never *do* go out without him. He'd hate it actually."

"Then my lamb, let him hate it. Because it's quite fantastic. After all, a foursome! What on earth does he imagine is going to happen to you? I suppose he thinks we're going to split up into couples and that some terribly dashing and quite irresistible young man is going to sweep you off your feet."

"Of course he doesn't think anything of the sort, Charlotte."

"The party doesn't begin till ten, darling: you'll have all the time in the world. I'd like you to dine with us first, but if you can't, you can't. We'll fetch you and bring you back."

"Yes," said Ursula. She looked at Charlotte very doubtfully. "I wish Barty could come," she said.

"Angel, so do I, but if he will work five nights out of seven there's nothing to be done about it. Now, that's all settled, and we're fetching you. All right? Grand."

But when she had gone, Ursula returned to her ironing with very mixed feelings indeed. Had she said she would go? Charlotte seemed to think so. It was very difficult. Perhaps she could have a cold at the last moment.

When Bartholomew came home that evening he paused at the living-room door and sniffed. "Hallo," he said, "that woman's been here again. No one else smokes those beastly Turkish cigarettes. I thought I said. . . ."

"I know, darling, but she rang up and asked me to a party, and I said I couldn't go. . . ."

"Naturally. Well?"

She looked at him; of course he had had a long day, but surely he was being unnecessarily chilly.

"Well?" he repeated, and he tapped the fender with an irritable foot. Now Ursula was also tired, and when she saw Barty's ankle rotating she felt herself ill-used.

"I had to say I'd go," she announced. "I hadn't any option. It's a party of four. They're fetching me and bringing me back."

"Suppose we have dinner?"

"Yes, of course. It's just ready." She had been silly to argue with him before he was fed. Had not her mother always warned her that a hungry man was an unreasonable animal?

They did not mention Charlotte again until they were drinking their coffee, and then Ursula said:

"You aren't cross, Barty, are you? I mean about my going. I don't actually want to and I'd far rather you were coming, only you know what Charlotte is."

Bartholomew pushed aside his coffee cup and took out his pipe.

YES," he said, "I know what she's like. She's ordered you about all your life. You're the perfect foil; she's dark and metallic and—what's the frightful word—glamorous. And you're soft and fair and elusive. Very nice and convenient from her point of view. If she wants a good time, and a foursome happens to suit her book, you're the obvious other woman."

"Barty, darling, put like that it sounds so beastly!"

"I meant it to. Half the divorce cases that crop up in the courts start from these so-called innocuous beginnings. However, you can safely leave Charlotte to me."

"You'll tell her?"

"I certainly will." He filled his pipe, lit it and puffed in silence for a moment or two. "Little Bear, *are* you bored in the evenings when I bring work home?"

"No," said Ursula, with an honesty that struck her as being possibly impolitic, but none the less necessary. "I'm never bored when I'm with you, whatever you're doing. I like looking at you, and wondering what we'll have for tomorrow's dinner."

Whereupon Barty said a great many foolish things to her which are really not worth repeating. After which he went into the hall and telephoned to Charlotte. Two minutes later he returned to the drawing-room, frowning tremendously.

"What did she say?" asked the anxious Ursula.

"She was giving a party," replied Bartholomew, "there appeared to be a great deal of noise going on, and she made out that she couldn't hear me. She asked me to lunch with her at her club tomorrow at one-thirty, and I said that it was impossible, so she said one o'clock and rang off."

"Shall you go?"

"The last thing I want to do. However, I suppose I'd better go and get it over.

"I don't see really why you've got to go at all."

"Nor do I, but it can't be helped. She must be made quite definitely to understand that she's got to stop interfering."

"Actually, I think it's quite kindly meant."

"That's as it may be."

URSULA heaved a small sigh. It was nice to be relieved of responsibility and impossible to regret Charlotte who had undoubtedly become a nuisance. All the same, Barty *was* a little solemn and managing, and, with a sudden inexplicable little rush of malice, she said:

"Don't let her vamp you."

Bartholomew raised his eyebrows. "I'm afraid, darling, I don't think that's even funny."

"Nor do I, really," she admitted, whereat he kissed her nose and was as agreeably facetious as his dignity allowed.

At half-past six next evening she heard Barty's key in the lock, and poked the wood fire to a brighter blaze. Dinner, in casseroles, could look after itself.

"Hallo, darling, I'm here," called Ursula. "Are you very cold?"

"No," said Bartholomew, "not a bit." He kissed his wife and sat down.

"Have you had a very heavy day?"

"So-so. Not too bad. What have you been doing with yourself?"

"Oh, nothing very exciting. Do tell me about Charlotte. Did you have a nice lunch?"

"Surprisingly good—yes."

"And what did (*Continued on page 62*)

Christmas Cards Wanted

Do you, like most of us, throw away your old Christmas cards, wishing perhaps you could think of some way of putting them to further good use?

If so, you may like to know of a bed-ridden ex-soldier who would be more than grateful to have them.

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WHAT a wonderful Christmas it will be! What lovely, lovely presents they'll make! Far nicer things—for everyone—than you've ever given before. And all this if you fill your Christmas stockings with perfectly fitting, perfectly tailored lingerie and stockings by Kayser Bondor. After all, every woman is a Kayser Bondor collector at heart and no other gifts can be more luxurious, yet more practical . . . look so pretty, yet wash and wear so well . . . no other gifts can say "Happy Christmas" so beautifully, yet be so tactful about your own appreciation of quality and value.

For Mother : *A really comfortable wool or wool mixture nightdress . . . because she does feel the cold so, but loves to look pretty, too. From* **59/11.**

For Your Sister-in-law : *A dream of a nightdress in drifting nylon, spellbound with frills and flounces . . . because she adores luxurious nighties; hates ironing them. From* **49/11.**

For Your Friend : *A perfectly tailored slip, classically plain in satin or crepe, or lace trimmed in crepe, nylon jersey or tricot—cut with the impeccable fit and finish that says Kayser Bondor . . . because she's practical, but has an eye for beauty, too. From* **13/11.**

For Your Daughter : *Easy-going, hard-wearing pyjamas in spun rayon, printed or plain . . . because Kayser Bondor design and finish are just right for the active young woman, who is careless about stress and strain, careful about smartness. From* **25/6.**

For Your Niece : *The most perfectly fitting brassieres she ever wore and the prettiest hip-slips in cotton, taffeta or crepe—full and flounced, pencil slim or hooped . . . because she's young and gay ; likes a trim fit and flowing lines. Brassieres from* **4/3** *and hip-slips from* **15/11.**

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she say about my not coming, and our dropping her?"

"Oh, well, it was a bit awkward really. I didn't get a great deal of opportunity to discuss the thing. I started to tell her, of course, and then I got side-tracked somehow. . . ."

"But she does understand. . . ."

"Well, actually, I compromised. I more or less had to. After all, it was her lunch. I said I'd bring you to this party myself."

"Barty, darling!"

"Just this once. Ordinarily, I simply can't go out in the middle of the week, and be fresh for work next day."

"No, of course you can't. I *do* think it's lovely of you, Barty."

"Well, darling, it seemed the only thing to do. I insisted on buying our tickets myself. It'll make it easier for me to tell her about the break."

URSULA wore a lilac frock, and Barty said she looked the incarnation of Spring. It was a pleasant reflection, but when they arrived at the West End hotel, April charm seemed a little too consciously naïve.

Charlotte, in a sheath of gold, heralded her arrival in waves of the scent of tuber roses; she was accompanied by two very grand young men with large moustaches.

The party was presently completed by a lively little actress in silver tulle and diamonds. One of the young men with large moustaches was plainly overcome.

"Of course," said Charlotte to Bartholomew. "It's a charity ball, don't forget." She looked at him with large dark eyes full of sympathy. "I know just how you're feeling. But when one wants to raise money for a really deserving cause. . . ."

"Quite," said Barty. Obviously she had good feeling. And if she did go out every night, perhaps it was almost always from altruistic motives.

"Shall we dance?" he suggested. "And, by the way, I do want to talk to you about Ursula. . . ."

"She's looking *divine*," interrupted Charlotte, "but don't worry, I chose both these boys with the greatest care. One of them's been aching to meet our little actress friend for *months*, and hasn't got eyes for anyone else; and the other's just got engaged to a girl in Scotland, and can't talk about anything except reels and haggis, *so* monotonous."

Ursula, had she heard, would most emphatically have agreed with her. She was not really enjoying herself very much. The dance floor was crowded, the bands blared, and it seemed that everyone was talking with unnecessary vigour and emphasis. Only twice was she able to dance with Bartholomew. To her surprise he did not seem to be in the least bored.

"One of her uncles by marriage," he told Ursula, "was an extremely distinguished lawyer."

"I wonder whose side he was on in the divorce case."

Barty looked at her reproachfully and said "She *is* our hostess, you know."

"SHE'S by no means a fool," he told Ursula on their way home in the taxi. "I was really agreeably surprised."

"Did you tell her, Barty?"

"Tell her what?"

"About our dropping her."

"Oh, I see. Well, actually, I couldn't very well. As a matter of fact I asked her to come in one Sunday evening and have a drink. We do owe an invitation to one or two people, and we may as well get them all over together."

"I see."

"Tired, Little Bear?"

"Just a bit. You enjoyed the party didn't you?"

"Yes, I did really. Didn't you?"

"Not very much. The man with the fiancée in Scotland told me something rather illuminating."

"And what was that?"

"He said he hardly knew Charlotte; he only met her for the first time at a party last week, and she made a complete bee-line for him. He said he was awfully amused."

"Really?"

"You needn't say it like that. *I* think it was funny, too. He didn't particularly want to see her again, but she was frightfully insistent, and so he agreed. He didn't mention his fiancée until he and his friend were dining with Charlotte on the evening of the party, and then he made rather a point of talking about nothing else just to annoy her."

"I call that extremely bad form."

"He said she rather deserved it. He said. . . ."

"I don't think, darling, I'm frightfully interested in what he said."

"It was about you, anyway."

"About me?"

"Yes. But it doesn't matter." She glanced at him in the darkness of the jolting taxi, and, finding his silence provoking, added quickly:

"He said: 'She seems to have transferred her attention to your husband.' She—she always was a tremendous flirt you know, Barty."

"She may have been; she's a very good-looking woman. But she's got her serious side. She really talks very intelligently. I'm inclined to think that, after all, she's right in saying I ought to take you about more."

They both slept late next morning, breakfast was a rush and the toast was burned.

Bartholomew, who had cut himself shaving, wore a little blob of cotton wool on his chin, and Ursula had a headache. They did not mention the party.

IT was on Saturday night, at the theatre, that Ursula, from the third row of the dress circle, observed Charlotte, with a party, in a box.

"I know," said Bartholomew, when she told him. "I saw them come in."

"But she told me she had already seen the play twice."

"Well, it's nothing to do with us if she wants to see it three times, is it?"

"Of course Edith Evans is wonderful," agreed Ursula, but something of her enjoyment seemed to have evaporated, and when they met Charlotte in the foyer it was somehow difficult to be quite as friendly as usual.

"*Hallo*, you two!" There was certainly no lack of enthusiasm in Charlotte's greeting. "Lovely to see you. Come and join us. We're all going on to have a little supper at my flat—nonsense, Ursula, the more the merrier. Isn't it a marvellous show? I simply had to go again."

Really Bartholomew seemed to need very little persuasion. The six of them—for the little actress and the younger of the two men with the smaller of the large moustaches, and a very fashionable person indeed of immense height and languid dignity, were of the party, all managed to crowd into Charlotte's car.

At the flat everybody was very gay indeed, and the languid gentleman woke up quite a lot about two o'clock, and did a number of not very funny imitations of distinguished comedians.

Charlotte watched all the proceedings with a brilliant and indulgent smile and Bartholomew by her side. Ursula had a most unworthy desire to slap her face.

Bartholomew went to sleep in the taxi going home.

ON the following afternoon, when his headache was better, Ursula said:

"Do you think the gay life suits us awfully well, because I don't."

"I was rather struck," replied Batholomew solemnly, "by Charlotte's comment on that very thing. When you were all making rather a row last night, she looked rather wistful, and said: 'It's all very natural, of course, but it palls awfully quickly doesn't it? After all, the only *lasting* things are the things of the mind.' Fancy her saying that, you know."

"Yes," said Ursula, rather loudly. "Just fancy! And what's even more remarkable is that *I* was making 'rather a row' and *she* was looking wistful——"

"Perhaps," said Bartholomew, holding his still aching temple. "I'm rather dense, but I fail to see——"

"A lot of things," said Ursula. "Try not to fail to hear this one. We're dropping Charlotte here and now. You listen to me." She crossed to the telephone.

Bartholomew closed his eyes. "Well, don't do it loudly, anyway."

"Charlotte? Ursula here. Listen, we—what d'you say? Oh, no, we're feeling rotten, thank you. And I rang up to—will we be all right for *what*? No we can't possibly—I haven't got to ask him, I know. The fact is, Charlotte, you'd better cut us out altogether. Oh, no, it isn't my headache, I haven't got one——"

"I *have*!" shouted Bartholomew. He leaped up and took the receiver from Ursula's hand. "Hallo!" he said. "Don't talk, *I'm* talking—I daresay it *is* rude. I *feel* rude, and if you ring up again and bother the pair of us, I'm going to be a lot ruder, so what?" Whereupon he replaced the receiver and returned to his chair.

"Oh, Barty *darling*!" said Ursula.

"Little Bear!" said Bartholomew fondly, and added: "Will the best wife in the world bring her besotted husband a couple of aspirins?"

END

No Trouble At All!

(*Continued from page* 19)

frig. face to face, but even had he done so I am sure he would have taken it for granted that it came through the Usual Channels, and not up the fire escape.

"Those next weeks, before what I believe they call completion in the house selling trade, were anxious ones for me.

"In the end I decided that the only thing for me to do, was to go to the agent, and tell him the whole ridiculous story, and throw myself, as it were, on his mercy. Tell him I was prepared to take any course recommended by him—except returning the frig. It was a Thursday, I remember, and Charles had just gone out to get his hair cut, when the telephone rang.

"It was the house agent, very kind and polite as usual, but asking me if I could make it convenient to drop in that morning.

"'Is it anything urgent?'" I asked.

"He said yes, it was.

"The agent's name was Mr. Watchit, and he was a charming man with one of those fascinating hair dressings, darling, like a stave of music laid out on his bald head, just waiting for a few crotchets and quavers to be added. He got me a chair, and said it was kind of me to call, as what he wanted to discuss with me was one of those things it was better to go into face to face, than over the telephone.

"I said that before he discussed what he had to discuss with me, there was something I felt I ought to tell him. He listened patiently while I explained the whole position. I can still see the awe-stricken and almost holy look that came into his eyes.

"'You purchased this property—merely to get the frig. out of the kitchen?'"

"'There was no other way at the time,' I explained. . . . "'My husband on a milk diet, and the milk perpetually off. . . .'"

"Without any warning he began to laugh, so I laughed, too, thinking while we were about it we might as well make it a party. Though as you may imagine, darling, I wasn't feeling too gay.

"When Mr. Watchit had got over his mirth, he beat a bell, and a jolly pretty girl came in with a vast book which he then slapped open. Then he folded his hands on it and looked at me over his glasses, like someone in a pulpit about to start.

"'I do not as a rule believe in miracles in daily life, Mrs. Mountjoy—but it appears to me that something in the nature of a miracle has been wrought on your behalf this morning. What I wished to discuss with you, is a client who has approached us with regard to this house of yours. He is most anxious to purchase it, and although we told him it had already been disposed (*Continued on page* 64)

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of—he made a very handsome offer. . . .'"

"'You mean,'" I gasped, "'that he will pay me what I paid—what I should have had to pay for it?'"

"'Better than that. He has apparently some personal reason, or more probably some inside information regarding property in this particular neighbourhood. He offers one thousand pounds over the price you paid—er—you *should* have paid. . . .'"

"Serena!" said Mary. "And you never told us. What a wonderful piece of luck. But then, you were always lucky."

"No, darling. Merely courageous. I must say I enjoyed the moment when I negligently laid the cheque for a thousand pounds on Charles's desk and told him to pay off his overdraft, only unfortunately I spoiled it by

No Trouble At All!

bursting into tears. It was the way Charles took it. 'Where did you get this,' he said in an awful voice. When I explained I had made it all myself, my dear, I thought the poor old sweet would have a relapse.

"I do think it is so charming the way really nice he-men still believe there is only one way in which ordinary women can make a lot of money!"

"But wasn't he grateful to you?"

"We never speak of it, darling. Only nowadays, when Charles starts talking about the Usual Channels—I always manage tactfully to bring the conversation round to real estate, and he knows what I mean. . . ."

END

600 Million Greetings

(Continued from page 13)

socks on their way to Mother have made the sorting office look like a centipede's untidy bedroom.

"People don't seem to realize that theirs isn't the only parcel in the van—we are careful, but we can't bed each parcel down like a new-born babe!"

I began to see the Post Office people's point of view, especially when I realized how indulgent they are: a round tin had all but lost its wrapping, but sympathetically I was told "round objects are the devil to pack—even we have difficulties." However, there was less patience with senders of "smelly rabbits, wet turkeys and hares which practically *walk* off, if you get what I mean."

As for spiky toys, umbrellas and the like, we've been so careless in the past that the Law has stepped in. The *Post Office Guide* informs us that we may not send "embarrassing parcels." But even in a Welfare State the Postmaster General is not concerned with his staff's morals—it is simply their physical safety which has to be protected.

On my way home I bought a copy of the *Guide* and became so absorbed I went past my station. If you fondly imagine that up to now you have been a law-abiding citizen I recommend this book to you. Your eyes will be opened.

You can't send playing-cards hardly anywhere abroad unless you first snip off the corners of each one "to the depth of ½ in." You commit an offence if you send soap to Basutoland or Mexico, a Christmas cracker to Eire or a mechanical lighter to Vatican City.

No Dutchman can legally be sent a gooseberry bush or a cutting of one, and you cannot send bees or beekeeping appliances to the Faroe Islands. By now I had decided to make it a "cards only" Christmas. But when I turned to the greetings cards section in that *Guide*, my heart sank again.

It seems impossible not to transgress the law at Christmas unless the Postmaster General's and my ideas on courtesy and convention tally. For he says I may only send a card at the reduced postage rate if the message on it contains nothing but a "formula of courtesy or of a conventional character not exceeding five words or initials. For example, *kind regards, best wishes* and other greetings and so on, not conveying any specific information or making an inquiry or request, are admissible. Phrases such as *Arrived safely, see you Monday* and so on, are not admissible. What if I say, "Congratulations, must celebrate together Monday"?

Nevertheless, difficult as message-writing will be this year, the Post Office staff everywhere has my respect and admiration. Yes, everywhere. The first of this year's inundation of letters to the red-coated, snowy-whiskered gentleman was addressed: "Father Christmas, Snowy Mountain, Poland." A conscientious sorting officer who obviously thought that anything was possible behind the Iron Curtain, sent the letter on its way. And his Comrade colleague on the other side of the Curtain was equally conscientious. The letter came back, promptly, rubber-stamped with the legend "Non Pologne."

END

Houses With Secrets

(Continued from page 16)

particular steps could prove a fatal trap for the unwary. Tread on the odd-numbered steps and all will be well. But to tread on any of the even-numbered ones is to set in motion a concealed mechanism which has the effect of causing the whole staircase to collapse and send the luckless victim headlong down into a vault seventy feet below!

A few years ago an extremely interesting secret chamber was discovered in an old Warwickshire farmhouse. A child playing in a little-used wing of the old house accidentally fell against the oak-panelled wall and in so doing touched off a hidden spring mechanism, whereupon a large section of the panelling slid aside which gave access to a narrow passageway.

Upon investigation this passageway was found to lead to a hidden room about seven feet square, situated immediately behind the fireplace. Within the chamber was a large number of books and papers relating to the Civil War.

Workmen engaged in demolishing an interior wall at Danby Hall, Yorkshire, were surprised to find behind it a second wall—a wood panelled one. Closer investigation revealed a spring-operated mechanism which, when depressed, caused a panel to slide aside affording access to a large room furnished in eighteenth-century style.

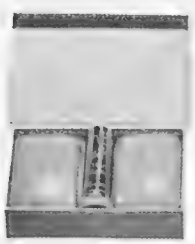
Window seats in old houses are sometimes not so innocent as they appear. A classic example to be seen at Parham Hall, Sussex, has a double secret. A cunningly concealed catch will permit the seat to be lifted up, disclosing beneath a cavity in which a fugitive could conceal himself with ease. Secondly, from inside this recess, the person in hiding could, by moving aside a sliding panel, gain access to a flight of steps cut in the thickness of the wall and leading down to what was probably at one time a hidden chapel used by Catholic priests.

Compton Wynyates Manor, Warwickshire, is one of the most interesting of Britain's houses with secrets, for it is honeycombed with concealed hideouts and secret passageways. In the panelling of its ancient walls are numerous cunningly concealed exits, operated by manipulation of certain parts of the carved woodwork. Some of these exits lead down to the basement and others up to the roof.

Cupboards and pictures with hinged backs, stair treads that lift up or swing to one side, grate backs and hearthstones that conceal entry to secret passages and flights of steps—all these devices were resorted to when civil war and religious persecution were rife in Britain.

END

Christmas Beauty



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2 Sweet Chimes, a shining bell holding Blue Grass Perfume 18/9

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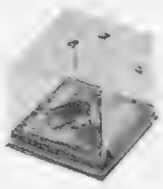
4 Blue Grass Gift Box with Flower Mist, Dusting Powder and Hand Lotion 56/6

5 Jewelled Duet Lipstick, gilt with jewelled centre, two extra long lipsticks 27/6

6 My Love Dusting Powder with Bath Soap 18/-

7 Perfume Pin-up, Perfumair, matching Sachet with jewel pins—Blue Grass 56/9

8 Travel case with 7 preparations in light-weight containers 182/6



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Paradise For Toys

(*Continued from page 27*)

he says, "when I was travelling back to England from a trip to the Middle East." By the time he reached London, the "thought" had expanded into a concrete plan. That was in July, 1950. He began to contact various friends : an official at the British Museum, a writer and his wife, an architect, a potter—several others of widely diversified interests and professions. By August they had formed a foundation committee of twelve, to do, as Mr. Daiken says, "the donkey work." And in the following October, the Toy Museum and Institute of Play was formally inaugurated. Meanwhile, the work had begun.

Letters were written, dozens of letters, to private individuals and public figures; to agencies, institutions, government bodies and the embassies of many countries; to the press, to trusts and foundations and various other such august bodies from whom help might be forthcoming.

Each letter sketched the outline of the toy museum-to-be, explained its three-fold character. First there would be the museum, which would eventually include toys from every country in the world and every possible period in history. To this would be added a play centre, where replicas of the toys would be available for the special enjoyment of visiting children. And thirdly there would be established an extensive research library which would collect all available material on the history of toys and games.

This was the blueprint—the dream pinned down prosaically by ink and paper. Yet even within these limits, it evoked an immediate response. The list of well-known people willing to lend their support included such names as Augustus John, Ninette de Valois, Sir Hugh Casson, Dame Sybil Thorndike, Henry Moore, Ronald Searle, Lady Allen of Hurtwood (a world-famous authority on children) to mention only a few. And the toys began to arrive not only from England, but from many other countries. All sorts of toys—a pogo stick, a jack-in-the-box, a Burmese puppet horse who looked like a forebear of Muffin the Mule, an Irishman dancing a jig, a Victorian engine, a talking book with the correct animal sound to fit each story. And every toy had its personal history.

Members of the committee were also infected with the toy-collecting fever. One of them unearthed a charming top in the form of a ballet dancer. Another remembered an old toy he had picked up in a second-hand shop during the war, when toys were scarce.

Meanwhile, however, one insoluble problem remained—the question of funds. In November the National Trust offered the committee a fine period house. They were eventually forced to turn it down, because they could not raise the money necessary to run it.

How does one go about establishing a museum from thin air? For nearly two years the committee continued to search for the answer—or even better, for a fairy godfather in the form of a wealthy benefactor with a passion for toys. Finally they held an emergency meeting. Mr. Daiken's house was beginning to overflow with toys. Something had to be done. And two of their members, Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Rye, rose magnificently to the occasion. If help was not forthcoming until the museum was established—then they would establish it. Why not a prefab of the museum in the basement of their own London home?

And there, on July 23, 1953, Leslie Daiken's toy museum at last became a tangible reality. Within an absurdly confined space, the committee had worked a genuine miracle. The shelves and showcases, the actual display, were designed by architect Mr. Stephen Garrett and another foundation member, Mr. Dudley Snelgrove. One entire wall was devoted to the fascinating story of movement and animation. For example, one could trace the family tree of our modern rubber ball. Its earliest ancestor was a ball of plaited rushes, or hide, which later became a sphere fashioned from wood or ivory or china—very pretty in some cases, but not much use for cricket! One could see how the wheel was used to set toys in motion.

Something like magic had been needed to transform the dark and cluttered little basement into this gay fairyland—and a very human magic had been forthcoming. When Mr. Daiken and his committee set to work, help poured in from the most unexpected quarters. There was, for instance, a man called John Rivers, the owner of a firm of builders, who met Mr. Daiken at a garden party. He wanted to hear all about the toy museum. When would it open? Very soon, said Mr. Daiken, but there was a little matter of an electric cable. . . . A few days later Mr. Rivers arrived in person to wire the whole basement.

Nobody ever grows too old for fun—even though our tastes in it may change. And that is why it seems a certainty that the tiny museum which opened last summer was the forerunner of what will one day become one of the loveliest museums in the world—a museum dedicated to telling the history of fun—to the memory of childhood—and to the better enjoyment of living.

END

All The Fun—Without The Fuss

(*Continued from page 20*)

such pains gets off to a flying start. If you live in the country and can get hold of a few horseshoes, dip them in matt white paint and stick tiny berried sprigs of holly in each hole. Arranged in a formal clover leaf pattern they will make an original centrepiece. Or—as shown in our sketch—they can be hung on bright red cords on the wall.

Almost any basket, too, makes an attractive container for holly and glittering bits of seasonal nonsense. Tie sprays of holly round the handle and clip candles to it in Christmas tree holders.

But a word of warning — stand the basket on a piece of plate glass, mirror or wood which will not be damaged by the wax dripping from the outer sloping candles. You will see one on the mantelpiece in the illustration.

The centrepiece on our Christmas table is a cracker holder. It was made from an old bell-shaped lamp shade frame. "Frosted" holly is tied round the circular top—originally the *bottom* of the frame—and to each upright with green garden twine. From the top edge are hung miniature glass balls, three to each segment of the frame—the centre one of each group lower than the other two. When finished the cracker holder is virtually a basket made of holly.

A cornucopia is an age-old symbol of plenty and prosperity—older by far, it is true, than Christmas itself. But what more suitable to express the spirit of this greatest Feast of all? Make tiny individual ones for place settings by twisting small silver paper doilies into cones, fixing them in place with a spot of gum or paste. Fill with sprigs of holly and mistletoe. Larger ones made in the same way can look enchanting hung on red ribbon between the banisters of a staircase.

Since the first Christmas card was sent a century ago, surely few have been able to resist their charm. But whoever posted that first card set future generations quite a problem. For over the years to display our cards and crow over their mounting numbers has become a joy second only to receiving them. But our cards will lose nothing for being strung tidily into vertical rows on ribbon run through the backs. Hang the strings of cards down each side of a fireplace like those in our sketch—or alongside a window or door. The placing of them depends, of course, upon the number you have to display.

END

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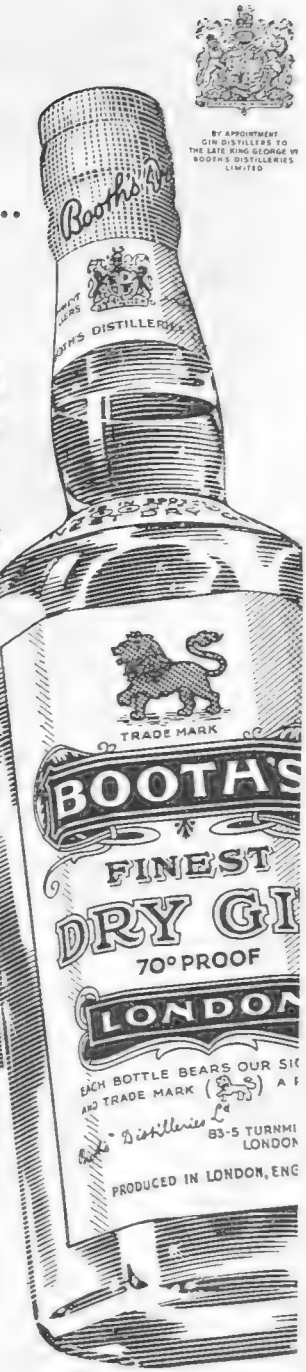

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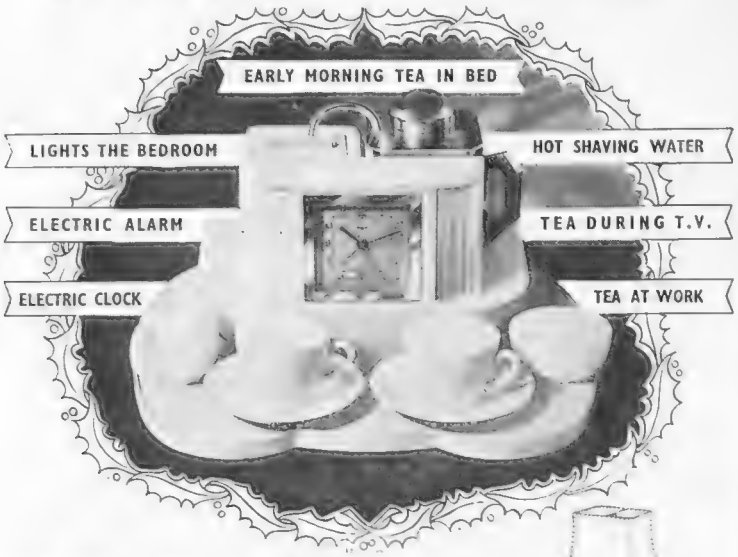

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Gadzooks! Sir Peregrine

(Continued from page 55)

was as rich, fulsome and satisfying as a meal of puff pastry and chocolate mousse. My lady might toss a haughty chin and stamp a slim foot, she might flaunt her charms like a wanton or scold like a shrew, but at heart she was all maidenly and melting tenderness. Her virtue remained unsullied through temptations and trials of every kind.

She was wooed, threatened and frequently abducted by a variety of rogues, from the pallid and sinister Sir Jasper to the swaggering and brutal Lord Mortimer. Her eyes flashed fire, her bosom heaved, she curled a disdainful lip—but, like her modern compatriots, she never surrendered. "' 'Tis a mettlesome filly, meseems,' quoth Sir Jasper with hissing intake of breath, as his arms fastened about her loveliness, 'yet will I humble that high head. Hate me, scorn me, as you will. I love ye the more for it.'" And so on. But it was no use. He never got anywhere with Lady Charmian or Lady Damaris, or even the Honourable Cleone. Their charms were reserved for the manly and elegant Sir Peregrine, Sir Jocelyn and Sir Gervase.

It was romance at a consistently high level, in a milieu of mellow manor houses set among clipped yews and shaven lawns. It had its own essential phraseology and even physiology. Brows were broad and noble, eyes were slumbrous and mouths soft-lipped, sighs were tremulous and bosoms invariably deep, natures were wayward, winsome and imperious, every curl was a rebellious tendril.

REVIEWING them across a gulf of twenty years and comparing these charmers with the humdrum heroines of modern romantic fiction, I am reminded of the crushing rebuke administered by Orson Welles to a make-up man, during a film he was directing. The make-up man had remarked that Rita Hayworth was sweating. Mr. Welles turned on the coarse wretch in Olympian displeasure. "Horses sweat, other people perspire, Miss Hayworth *glows*." Very right and proper, too.

Lady Charmian and Lady Cleone, in moments of emotional stress, likewise glowed. They also pouted, stormed and had an astonishing command of refined invective. ("Odious animal, debased cur, loose me! Had I a whip you should feel it.") But with what sweet, what generous abandon, they finally yielded on page 250 or thereabouts. Above all, what glorious creatures they were, what vivid, tempestuous goddesses, egad—each one of them the toast of a county and worthy of its homage. A man was a poor fish who would not risk a pistol ball in the gizzard for a chance to win those proud lips, not to mention the fortune that went with them.

Attendant on the main protagonists were a number of family retainers of quaint speech but unquestioned devotion, gentlemen's gentlemen, coy maidservants, stately housekeepers, grooms, postilions and sundry odd varlets and hangers-on whose origins may have been dubious but whose hearts were pure gold. In an emergency they could be trusted to lay about them to good account, or to ride to their mistress's rescue in the nick of time.

Interwoven at a lower level were innumerable picturesque characters culled from the roads and by-ways on which the hero wandered in search of adventure and the heroine by force of circumstances, footpads, tinkers, peddlers, poachers, strolling fiddlers, ex-prize fighters and other addicts of the Fancy. Here again the phraseology was distinct and particular. A crowd was a "rabblement," a wood was a dingle, copse or bosky dell, an inn was either a goodly hospice or sequestered tavern—but every room in it was sure to be a "snug chamber." It was never dark, dirty, ill-ventilated nor verminous Perish the thought.

Similarly, mine host himself could be depended on to provide any amount of good cheer and instant refreshment. However remote the place, however late the hour, there were no grumbles, no supply difficulties, no dead fires to mar the warmth of the runaway couple's reception. Scarcely had they rapped on the oaken door than the landlord's lattice swung wide, out poked his head (ruddy of visage, mien or countenance) and in a twinkling all was warmth and jollity.

Lusty serving wenches appeared from nowhere with braised capons and stuffed hares, ostlers came at the double to stable the foam-spattered horses. (No one ever just jogged along in those days. The highroad perpetually thundered under flying hooves and rattling coach-wheels.)

THE dells and dingles were equally dependable. In every sylvan glade hospitality was offered to the wayfarer by obliging gipsies, or by the aforesaid tinkers, poachers and other folk of the High Toby. Sometimes the happy company round the camp fire was joined by mysterious strangers who turned out to be ever so slightly shady, but whose natures were chivalrous and whose manners impeccable. Rough looks mattered not a jot. There was nothing to fear, really. Round oaths might be exchanged but no one ever said anything actually rude, or did anything that transgressed the bounds of decorum.

My lady, wrapt in her cloak, was able to stretch herself on the mossy turf under the stars in perfect confidence that she would wake unscathed to a pearly dawn and the carolling of birds.

Somewhere in the crystal stream that ran close by there was certain to be a convenient pool in which she could lave off the dust of the highway, unwatched by prying eyes, and emerge beauteous as ever, with every tendril neatly in place.

Even the few non-pedigree heroines, who were usually gipsies—though there was once, too, if I remember rightly, a lady pirate—were equally decorous and paid the same strict attention to personal cleanliness. Bloodthirsty they may have been, and given—like their aristocratic counterparts—to the prideful mien, the flashing eye and curling lip; but morally they were irreproachable. Hygiene and propriety were quintessential to the sylvan glade.

Of course, the weather had a good deal to do with it. In those idyllic days, to the best of my recollection, it practically never rained. The leafy lanes and bowers were ever dappled with the sunshine of eternal summer. To take to the road was a delight as well as an adventure. Shoes never pinched, feet never ached nor squelched through mud. No one suffered from corns, or streaming colds.

Nor was my lady impeded in the least by hooped petticoats and high heels when she roamed the woods with the gipsies. Even when she had to plunge through a thicket to escape from the leering Lord Mortimer she never looked the sorry fright you and I would have looked in similar circumstances.

Coincidences and disguises played a large part in the narrative. Lady Cleone had only to don a mob cap and pinafore and she instantly assumed the identity of Betsy, her faithful serving maid. This led to a sequence of misunderstandings with Sir Peregrine, or Sir Beverley, or Sir Peter—himself posing as a fashionable fop and travelling incognito to prove his mettle—and thence to a crisis in which honour had to be vindicated by force of arms against the most vicious and ruthless duellist of the day. But it was all right. Under his dandyish exterior Sir Peregrine, too, was a noted swordsman and the detestable Lord Mortimer was neatly stabbed in the vitals in chapter forty. So love and virtue triumphed and all was ecstatically well.

The descriptive passages, like the dialogue, had their curious archaisms and oddities of syntax. Sentences tended to begin with "And of a sudden," "In sooth," or "Needs must I tell—." The more emotional speeches were lushly larded with dots and dashes, which took up a lot of space and made the stories seem longer than they were.

But for me at least none of them was ever long enough. I could have tramped the broad highway for ever with my high-bred lovers, and the admission may well stir an answering chord in the hearts of millions of other former devotees. How many blissful sighs have heralded the closing of the final page only the enormous sales of these romances can testify.

Their appeal for English girlhood rested, I believe, less in the escapism of pure fairy tale than in something inborn and deep-seated in the reader. They were as native as the oak, as refreshing as the sweet air of the Kentish weald itself—an apotheosis of rural Merry England, purged of squalor, poverty and mud. That the picture was a bit highly coloured is no reproach. This was its charm and its strength. At the worst it was a deal more edifying than the dreadful stuff with which modern youth is regaled.

If it comes to a choice between the elegant if improbable Sir Peregrine and the sordid reality of the American gunman, I know who would get my vote. And I am thankful to find that this view is not entirely unsupported. The goodly company of which I was once so ardent a member lives on, it seems.

On many a library shelf the well-loved titles appear—reissued in their umpteenth editions—and sometimes to this day my hand hovers, hesitates, but withdraws again. The nostalgia that grips me is more for the golden age at which I could read them, avid, uncritical, lost to the outer world. *O tempora, o mores!* Return I dare not.

(Illustrations for this article are from book jackets of Jeffery Farnol's novels, published by Sampson Low.)

END

So Now We Move

(Continued from page 52)

I must get changed again directly. I meant to come out with you and start 'em off, but it just can't be done. But I'm sending a plumber, two brickies and a joiner, and tomorrow I'll go out myself and put on another plumber too."

One job at least proved simple, that was the adaptation of furnishings. Luckily our new home lacks ancient beams, huge brick fireplaces, low ceilings and other limiting features.

Our mixed bag of furniture—a history in itself of the various phases gone through in twenty years—ranges from contemporary limed oak to eighteenth century antiques and carpenter-made bookshelves.

The cottage has two additional rooms to our late flat and a much larger kitchen, but the new hall is just a passage and the sitting-room is smaller. To make the best use of the latter and of the adjoining book-cum-dining room we are furnishing them both with pieces in mahogany, rosewood or walnut that have a family likeness and so can be changed about. Colour schemes, though varied, won't fight.

Keeping the downstairs rooms on the formal side has simplified the "curtains and covers" problem. Although I have a good stock, being old-fashioned enough to believe in having winter and summer sets, the difficulty was that some of them looked a little too dressy for a country cottage. This was especially true of the long wide curtains and fitted bedspreads in peach slipper satin. However, the curtains have divided into two narrower, but floor-length pairs, and dyed claret and Persian red respectively are going to look wonderful in the sitting and dining-rooms around Christmas time when the chintz and printed linen will seem a bit cold.

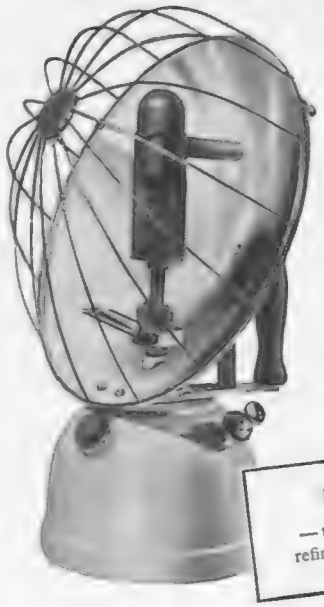
Pelmets for the upstairs rooms (the existing wood ones will "make over" for the sitting-room windows) are going to be nice and cheap. The senior partner has ordered strips of aluminium, four inches deep and six inches longer than the width of each window. One end of each strip will be screwed into the window frame, curved out to clear the "railway" and then curved back again to the other window edge.

To keep it firmly in position, he's going to screw each strip to the centre of the window frame through a small block of wood. When fixed, the aluminium will be painted to match the general woodwork.

Yes, in spite of all that remains to be done, next week we move. One's own home in the country; one's own modest stake in the land; that's something worth looking forward to, we think!

END

Concentrated heat



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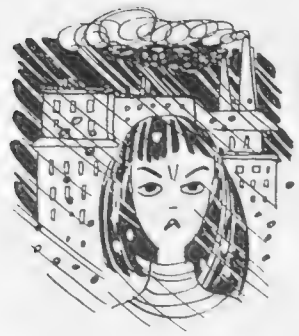

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Cottage Christmas—In The Cotswolds

(*Continued from page* 15)

creating an illusion of Biblical Palestine on this high Cotswold road; and then they were immediately swallowed up in the night again. No matter that they were only Cotswold mummers going their annual round—country lads who for an hour or two had donned the robes of the Three Kings of Orient. The illusion was complete.

Cirencester—Stroud—Edge; and, turning in under the wood, we were home! Down in the valley the lights of Gloucester winked, and a golden shimmer showed Malvern in the far distance. Mrs. Alder, the good soul, had risen to the occasion—the fire was lighted, the table laid, and she had even stuck some holly behind the pictures on the walls. As only old cottages can, ours received us with a welcome deeper than words. It all seemed, indeed, too good to be true.

But just how good we were to realize later. Next morning, out of a frosty blue sky the sun shone on the familiar landscape now sparkling with snow. There were calls to make. Old Tom must needs celebrate the occasion with mugs of home-made wine: it tasted more like fire-water than wine. Farmer Ted's wife, always more delighted to give than to receive, would not let us go until she had piled us with apples and walnuts, a bag of brown eggs, and a late rose in bud. Jesse Gable—Granddad to all of us—had a new owl to show us, one of several he had fashioned out of cement.

It was Wilfred and his wife, however, who were destined to set the seal on our happy mood, merely by mentioning that they would be going to Midnight Mass at the Priory. Midnight Mass—of course; it suddenly seemed the inevitable thing to do; we too would go.

I find myself lost for words to tell the way that solemn ceremony focused our happiness, giving it the meaning it asked. To this the whole journey had led. It was the simplicity that claimed one.

Here was none of the intricate weavings, amounting almost to a slow pavane, which are integral to the Christmas Mass as I had seen it in the great churches of Catholic countries. In their white habits, with their hands meekly folded in the flowing sleeves, the monks leaned back in their stalls, each candle-lit face framed in the shining oak. It almost seemed as if, while that solemn ritual was unfolding, humanity here was purged of its usual dross.

Like a fugue that slowly mounts to its climax, the ceremony approached that great moment when, to a heavenly jingle of silver bells, the Host was lifted for all to adore. Then the chapel door was opened, to include the workaday world outside, whereupon the Priory bells rocked in exultation. Was it a mist in the eyes that dilated the stars seen through the open door, so that they seemed to dance? But the door was closed again; the Mass drew to its quiet close; the chapel was emptied at last.

We climbed into the car and drove home through the silent lanes. And truly it would not have surprised us now, if, above the motor's throb, we had heard angels singing, "Peace to all men of good will"!

END

Present Indicative

(*Continued from page* 39)

Prices and where to buy the Christmas presents suggested on pages 38 and 39.

PRACTICAL PRESENTS

1. Jacqmar fabrics from Jacqmar Ltd., 16 Grosvenor Street, W.1.
2. Chutneys: Mrs. Payne and Co., 7 Beauchamp Place, Knightsbridge, London, S.W.3, 1 lb. pot in raffia hat, 6s. 6d.; 2 pots in basket, 12s. 6d., postage 1s. 6d.
3. Sports grip, Simpsons (Piccadilly) Ltd., Piccadilly, London, W.1. £13 in coach-hide, £8 12s. 6d. in canvas, post free. Pullman bag from Scotch House, 2 Brompton Road, S.W.1, £5 12s. 6d., post free.
4. Plastic picnic set from Liberty's of Regent Street, W.1, £5 15s. 3d., postage 2s. 6d.
5. Breakfast tray from Marshall and Snelgrove, Ltd., Oxford Street, London, W.1, £2 12s. 9d., postage 2s.
6. Keyword from Army and Navy Stores, Victoria Street, S.W.1, price £1 1s., postage 1s.
7. Chinese mules from Liberty's, Regent Street, London, W.1, 16s. a pair, postage 1s. 6d.
8. Escoffier delicacies from 1s. 8d. for one cup and 5s. 3d. for the set of three from all high-class food stores.

PERSONAL PRESENTS

1. Chanel No. 22, £4, other sizes from £1 5s. upwards. Perfume fob from Marshall and Snelgrove of Oxford Street, W.1, price £1 5s., postage 1s.
2. Musical-box compact, from John Lewis and Co. Ltd., Oxford Street, London, W.1, £6 6s., postage 1s. Pond's Angel Face from all good chemists, 8s. 6d.
3. Vauxhall Velox from D. L. Davies, 102 Kensington High Street, London, W.8. £1 17s. 6d., postage 9d. Aveling-Barford diesel roller from Harrods of Knightsbridge, S.W.3, 3s. 9d., postage 9d.
4. Scarf from Simpsons (Piccadilly) Ltd., £3 15s., post free. Cocktail slide rule from Harrods of Knightsbridge, 15s. 9d., postage 9d.
5. Jewelled lipstick from all Helena Rubinstein stockists, 12s. 9d.
6. Miniature lighter, Alfred Dunhill Ltd., 30 Duke Street, St. James's, London, S.W.1, silver plated, £3 7s. 6d.; gold plated, £4 7s. 6d., post free.
7. Sculptida necklace, 25s.; ear-rings to match, 8s. 6d.

END

I love

APRY

the liqueur of the ***Apricot***

MARIE BRIZARD

When Turkeys Trekked To Town

(*Continued from page 24*)

ill-fed beast. Up to the eighteenth century bear, of which an enormous number were imported for bear-baiting purposes, and venison were considered indispensable for the table at any feast. Until the fifteenth century the bird most commonly found on the table of ordinary folk was the bustard which inhabited the heaths and open spaces of these islands in huge flocks. Since early in the nineteenth century it has been extinct. Another standby was the heron.

Amongst the rich, swan and peacock were the central attraction of the feast, although neither of them made really good eating. They were usually brought to table dressed in their own feathers with great ceremony, preceded by a boar's head, to the accompaniment of a fanfare of trumpets.

The Christmas pudding as we know it was not eaten before the end of the seventeenth century. In earlier times a concoction of meat-broth, raisins, wine, fruit juice and spice thickened with brown bread was served at the beginning of the meal. Mince pies of a much richer character than we know were part of Christmas fare from the sixteenth century. They usually contained mutton or neat's tongues, chicken and eggs as well as the ingredients common today.

The custom of having a boar's head as the central dish for the Christmas feast was based on pagan superstitions of great antiquity brought to the north of England from Scandinavia where the idea of the spirit of corn embodied in pig form was strongly held.

Another north country custom which has strong affinity with old customs in north Russia and the Scandinavian countries is the Christmas Eve ceremony of lighting the Yule Log, clog or block and the Christmas Candle in order to turn night into day.

The ceremony of lighting the Yule Log was the signal for festivities to begin. All members of the household gathering together to quaff ale and cut the Yule cake, forerunner of the Christmas cake. In the West Riding they sang a special ditty, "Yule ! Yule ! a pack of new cards and a Christmas stool !"

Many of the Christmas customs which we still follow today are a compound of pagan, Roman and Christian festivals. For that reason the festivities have always covered a period of about twelve days. January 6, Twelfth Night, is the old Christmas Day from before the calendar was changed.

The basis of the Twelfth Night festivities has always been the desire to propitiate the gods so that the year ahead may be fruitful. Mulled cider is the drink with which to wassail the apple trees.

Special spice or plum cakes were part of the Twelfth Night celebrations. Cut into pieces, a platter for the men and another for the women, they were decorated with a crystallized fruit or comfit on the top. A bean was hidden under the comfit in one of the men's cakes and a pea for the women. The man and woman getting the slices with the bean and the pea became King and Queen for the day.

In many parts of the country Christmas festivities were an excuse for customs which allowed an invasion of the normal privacy of the Englishman's "castle." At Shillingstone in Dorset the Christmas Wassailers used to be accompanied by a man with his head thrust into the hollowed-out head of a bull, and a sack thrown over his body. Traditionally, the bull with his horn and glaring glass eyes, and his keeper, had the freedom of every house where there were Christmas festivities, and the right of entry to every room. As the evening wore on both bull and keeper became increasingly less strictly sober, the whole company would flee as they entered, leaving the Wassailers free to help themselves at the festive board.

"I should be loath
To meet the rudeness and swilled insolence
Of such late wassailers."

Milton : *Comus.*

END

Party Games

(*Continued from page 45*)

pins, rings, a visiting card, a comb, coloured buttons, a couple of flowers, a napkin-ring, and so on. Let your guests study this for one minute only, and then write a list of all the things they remember seeing. The best list gets a prize.

Zoo: Here's a nice noisy game which I always find most satisfyingly idiotic; a good game to play at a large party. Write the name of an animal or bird on four slips of paper. Continue, in groups of four, until the number of guests is covered. Mix the slips in a hat and each guest then draws one. At a given signal each person makes the noise of the animal on his slip. The first group to find all its members wins.

The Drawing Game is best played in two rooms. Place one team in one room, the second team in the other. Master of Ceremonies stands in the corridor, between the two rooms. One member of each team starts the game by receiving from the Master of Ceremonies a subject to draw on paper. The team-leader then dashes back to his team and draws it without saying a word. The team-member who guesses what it is goes up for another subject, and so on till the list is exhausted. The team reaching the end of the list first wins. Prize : a box of mixed crayons? Subjects can be as asinine as you like; e.g. silence, a sneeze, electricity, fog in the Channel, a technical hitch, and so on. No *artistic* ability is necessary.

END

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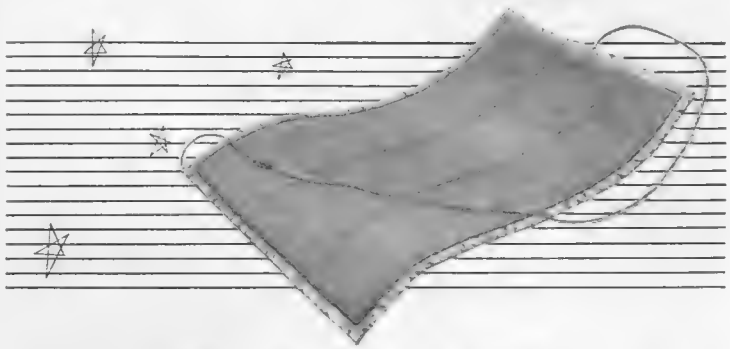

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Legend Of Osterhausen

(Continued from page 12)

But he could not follow a hodge-podge of another man's work he said; he must start again and that would mean a new block of stone and so round again he went and levied his second toll on each of them.

One by one the masons had finished; the table had been erected, the panels carved, the figures placed. Suspicious eyes were turning on Kugler.

"No man sees my work until it's finished," declared Julius, flying into the usual passion of the justly suspected.

"It is not long to the date set for the consecration," said Pastor Rosseger significantly.

"You need have no fear," said Kugler, sneering. "Your Christ will be there."

When it was only a matter of days, one of his women friends from Kreutzberg came to the village and hunted him out. So a roistering day they spent until the evening when there came a knocking at the door.

Julius went white to the lips, his knees knocked and his heart turned to water. The woman, anxious to save her skin, slipped up the ladder to the loft.

It was a stranger wrapped in a great cloak and seeking shelter for the night.

"Are you alone?" asked Julius, with a strange drying of the throat.

"Yes," said the other, of whom Julius could see nothing but the eyes and those he would not meet. "Yes, I am alone," and he gave a sigh and stood in the night outside waiting to be asked in.

Julius peered doubtfully into the darkness. He had a feeling there were people out there; a whole multitude.

* * *

With a last look at that Night so crowded and yet so empty, Julius bade the stranger enter, and busied himself with the bars of the door. When he turned he found the stranger seated by the fire. His face was hidden in the hood of his cloak but his eyes Julius saw clearly, never to forget.

Julius put what food he had before him.

"You will eat with me?" invited the other.

"Why not?" said Julius, insolently, and sat down and they ate together and later drank together.

The bread clogged in Julius's throat and the wine was like fire.

Every time he looked up he caught the stranger's eyes on him and it seemed there was sorrow and reproach in them.

"Have you come far?" said Julius eventually.

"Yes," said the traveller in a weary voice.

"And you go—where?"

"Where," echoed the stranger, as though that was something he did not know himself.

"Have you money to pay me?" said Julius, his ratlike face twitching.

The stranger fumbled in his cloak, brought out a bag that chinked and passed it over.

"Here is your pay," he said.

At the sound of the chink of coins the woman upstairs stirred. She came slowly down the ladder and stood smiling provocatively at the traveller.

"Go away," commanded Julius, harshly. "Go home—if you have one, strumpet."

IGNORING Julius, she took the beaker from the table, put it to her lips, smiling over the edge of it at the stranger and drank. As she put the cup down it splashed up and a great blood-red drop fell on the man's sandalled foot.

"Pardon, master," she said, and knelt as though to wipe it off with the hem of her skirt, and then, a new wanton thought coming to her, unbound her thick hair and with a laugh shook it down and wiped the foot clean with a great handful of it.

"Get out; get out," whispered Julius fiercely in her ear, took her shoulders and thrust her to the door, she all brazen defiance, openly ogling the stranger with eye and swaying body. As they reached the door, struggling together, the stranger spoke:

"Mary," he said, and she turned and looked at him.

It was like seeing an egg cracked open, Julius said afterwards. There was first blankness, then recognition, then appalling shame and abasement. Before that gentle sorrowful gaze she sank to her knees, rolled on her face on the floor, plucked at it as though she would pile it above herself.

Rising, the Stranger stooped and lifted her; for a moment she was in the support of his arms and then pulling herself from their grasp she ran out into the night.

"Trade good with you?" said Julius, picking up the bag of money and weighing it thoughtfully. "Busy, eh? Plenty of work?"

"There is always much for me to do," said the other.

"And plenty of money, eh?"

"Once," said the stranger, looking at him full, "all the kingdoms of the earth were mine for the asking."

A plan was growing in Julius's mind, perhaps it had been there from the time he had first opened the door. His throat was like sand; his heart jumped about within him.

He went to his workshop, found a thin razor-sharp chisel and, concealing it, came back into the living-room.

"You are tired," he said, and his voice was false even to his own ears. "Come, lean on me. I will take you where you can rest."

And then he drove the chisel deep into the other's back. The stranger fell without a sound, without a struggle.

Like a ravening wolf Julius fell on his knees by the body, searched with trembling hands to find nothing. That one paltry bag of money had been all the man had had excepting the clothes he wore.

He saw the man fully for the first time, face to face as it were, and even in his confusion he noticed the beauty and nobility of the dead face, and perhaps that set an idea scampering in his ratlike mind by which he could both avoid the consequences of his crime and even gain fame and money.

Years ago his father had devised a new kind of casting cement. The streams that came down the mountainside were heavily impregnated with mineral. If a stick was dropped into a pool, in a little while it became coated over so that one could hardly tell it from the solid rock except that it floated. Using this as a base Emanuel had evolved a cement which set quickly like plaster but retained the appearance of fine stone.

With trembling hands Julius found a supply, mixed a quantity and then dragging the body into his workshop and placing it sitting on a block of stone, he coated it over completely in the cement, pressing the robelike cloak into it and coating that over, too. Layer upon layer he applied until not a trace of human origin remained.

Exhausted, he fell asleep and slept until the late afternoon.

HE was awakened by a hammering at the door and still befuddled opened it to find the village outside.

"We have come to see your Christ," said one of them, and he stared in terror.

Thinking that what had happened the previous night must have been a dream, and dumbly, because he could not think of anything else to do or say, he led them through the house to his workshop.

Sitting there was the figure as we see it today.

(Continued on page 74)

Ampler Fare

(Continued from page 56)

cooker, simplify the operation by bringing the nuts to pressure for 2 minutes. They will peel very easily. Add the butter, the finely chopped ham, the parsley, sugar and breadcrumbs, and pound all together to a paste. Add the seasoning and mix in the beaten egg.

Flank your turkey with a piece of gammon, boiled gently in water to cover. Add a few cloves, a tablespoon of vinegar and a teaspoon of brown sugar to the water. As soon as it is cooked, remove the skin quickly and coat with golden crisp breadcrumbs.

Here is the recipe for a really rich **Christmas Pudding:**

½ lb. chopped suet
6 oz. chopped prunes
6 oz. chopped peel
6 oz. each raisins, sultanas and currants
½ lb. each flour, dark brown sugar, brown breadcrumbs
¼ teaspoon mixed spice
¼ teaspoon nutmeg
Juice of half a lemon
Pinch of salt
1 gill milk
½ wineglass brandy

Mix all the dry ingredients together, beat the eggs well, then add. Mix the lemon juice and brandy, and stir in. Beat well so that all is blended, then slowly add the milk and beat again. Stand overnight, mix again before putting into buttered pudding-bowls. Cover with greased paper, then with scalded cloths, and boil for six hours. Replace the covers with fresh dry paper and cloths, then store till required. On Christmas Day boil for two hours.

Top each portion with **Brandy Butter,** made with 2 oz. fresh butter (and I *mean* butter!), 2 oz. castor sugar, a dessertspoon brandy. Cream the butter before gradually adding the sugar. Beat well, adding the brandy as you beat. The mixture should be white and creamy. Sprinkle a little nutmeg on top before serving.

Let the rest of your Christmas dinner match the above recipes in amplitude, and you will have recaptured the gusto of former days. Your palate will accept the unaccustomed richness with gratitude and appreciation.

Now (after a suitable interval) for tea! Your Christmas cake will, of course, be fruity and matured. If you like a dark, sticky, rich cake, try this American way with it. After it has cooled, and before storing, pierce it in several places with a skewer, and pour over it a small wineglass of rum or brandy. Allow the spirit to soak in before wrapping and storing, and don't decorate it for at least a week.

MINCEPIES, of course, with shortcrust for the lower part, and flaky pastry made with real lard for the top. And a good **ginger cake.** Here is an excellent one, which keeps moist for a long time. You will need:

6 oz. butter
6 oz. castor sugar
¾ lb. self-raising flour
1 tablespoon syrup
½ teasp'n ground ginger
4 eggs
1 tablespoon sieved icing sugar
½ lb. crystallized ginger
A few halved walnuts

Beat the syrup, sugar and butter together till creamy. Mix the flour and ginger, add a tablespoon to the creamed mixture, together with one egg and beat well. Add more flour and the second egg, then beat again. Continue in this way until all the eggs and flour are beaten in thoroughly. Grate 3 oz. of the crystallized ginger, reserving 1 oz. for the top; mix the grated ginger into the cake. Grease and flour a cake-tin and three-quarters fill with the mixture. It needs a moderate oven, and will be ready in about fifty minutes. Cool on a wire rack, and when cold top it with thin water icing, then decorate with halved walnuts and pieces of crystallized ginger.

An old lady once told me a story of her childhood. In her home, she said, it was the custom to serve bread and butter, *or* bread and jam; never bread *and* butter *and* jam together. When she was six years old, she was asked to tea by some neighbours, and for the first time in her life tasted the coolness of butter and the sweetness of strawberry jam together on bread. The memory of that deliciousness has remained with her through all the years; never has she been able to recapture that gastronomic experience. There is, of course, a moral to this story. It is that no handicap is without its compensations. Here we are with fourteen years of economy behind us, eager to experience, as if for the first time, the pleasures we once knew.

I hope you will all have a happy Christmas. I'm certainly looking forward to mine.

END

Journey Into Fairyland

(*Continued from page* 34)

should not try to see or spy on fairies; neither could they speak to them, speak about them or mention any favours received from them.

The fairies were dependent on mortals for most of their food (they loved cream and butter) also, strangely enough, for their bath water. This must have been a marked difference between the fairy and the human population of Elizabethan England. "A person would be thought impudently profane who should suffer his family to go to bed without first having set a tub or pail full of clean water for these guests to bathe themselves in."

With their extremely high standard of conduct and cleanliness, loving a strict diet and an upright life, fairies were a kind of invisible domestic tyrant.

In fact the fairy habit of pinching the slut black and blue and rewarding the good servant with money in her shoes was a most effective cure for laziness below stairs.

In character, the fairy at this time seems more capable of mischief, even downright wickedness, than of good. They would bewitch humans with disease or blindness, blast crops and cattle, steal children and put changelings in their place, mortal children being the tribute they had to pay to the devil. The fairy habit of seducing gullible mortals and turning them into witches was, by British law, punishable by death—the death of the human, of course. In their kindlier moments, fairies would heal disease, foretell the future, grant the gift of second sight and bestow upon their favourites the "white fairy money" or jewels fetched from under the sea.

However, even allowing for these acts of benevolence, there was no fairy character who could be called a "Good Fairy." That is, until Shakespeare wrote *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and created something close to a revolution in fairyland.

One of the most drastic changes was in size. As far as can be ascertained, the average sixteenth-century fairy was about the size of a child or a small adult. They were sometimes confused with humans, even by Shakespeare himself when Marina in *Pericles* is asked: "But are you flesh and blood? Have you a working pulse? and are no fairy?" But the *Midsummer Night's* fairies were tiny—so tiny that they could shelter in an acorn cup.

More important still, they had dropped their sly ways and malicious habits. They were now wholly devoted to making the world a happier and more beautiful place. Their names, as well as their activities, were connected with flowers and insects—killing cankers in musk-rose buds, stealing honey bags from the bees. They would not think of causing mortals any genuine hurt or discomfort. Instead, they seemed bent on establishing the precept upon which the tradition of the Good Fairy was to be established from now on: that their magical powers should be used to ensure that foolish mortals lived happily ever after.

Even today, in remote parts of the countryside, there are fairies who are still trying to live up to the genuine tradition of their disreputable ancestors. But it is not easy. Bewitching mortals is not the simple task it used to be. And fairy rings are casually dismissed as being caused by a certain mushroom.

Of course, in these practical and scientific times, the Good Fairy is also losing ground. But at Christmas time she still comes into her own, glittering resplendently from the pantomime stage or sparkling gaily from the top of the Christmas tree. And if she sometimes seems a little too good to be true that is, after all, her prerogative.

The colour illustrations to this article were taken from Edmund Dulac's "Sleeping Beauty And Other Fairy Tales," published by Hodder and Stoughton, 1910, and Walt Disney's film "Peter Pan." The drawing by Arthur Rackham of the fairies from "A Midsummer's Night's Dream" is from "Tales From Shakespeare," published by Dent and Co., 1909 and Cinderella is after a painting by Cruikshank.

END

Don't Listen Ladies!

(*Continued from page* 33)

Jean Bateman's gift choice: A Dunlopillo bed cushion will cost £2 9s. 6d., an Anglepoise Lamp £4 14s. 8d. or £5 6s. 6d. according to the finish. A new hair style, by one of the maestros, M. Raymond or Rene of Paris, will be 2 gns. If it is to be furs, a Tescan lamb evening cape or stole in Mincella should be in the region of £20, a full length coat between £40 and £55.

Don't just buy nylons. Branded names have standards to maintain. You won't go wrong with Kayser Bondor, Ballito, Aristoc or Taylor Woods.

Now domestic equipment, the English Electric cooker with a selector time switch, which turns itself *on* as well as *off*, quite unattended, is the last word in cooking and is £55. The bachelor girl will not hanker for this as much as the compact, current-saving Ovenette by Hawkins Electric, which is £4 9s. 6d. A Kenwood Food mixer, any housewife's dream, is £26 13s. 3d., an electric coffee percolator by Premier Electric is £5 10s. 0d. The electric iron with the button-minding gadget is made by Hotpoint and costs £3 15s. 0d., although the "Sylph" by Premier Electric might appeal to some women because of its extra lightness of weight, and costs less at £2 19s. 6d. A Hoover washing machine will set you back £35 2s. 9d. for the Junior model. But if the household wash is a large one, go the extra £10 odd for the large model, which has refinements of automatic emptying and so on.

END

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SCOTLAND IN THE HEART OF LONDON

There was first a dumbfounded silence and then a low murmur of awe. Julius clapped his hands to his head and fell down in a fit.

"He has worked too hard," they said, and whilst some tended him, others bore the figure of the Christ away.

"But where is the Iscariot?" asked one of them. They hunted the place and could not find it.

Across the room Julius and Pastor Rosseger looked at each other.

"Fear not," said the Pastor, stroking his long beard. "Where there is Christ there will always be the betrayer."

They had to wait many years for their Iscariot, though, for the next morning when they went to look for Kugler he had fled, taking his little bag of money with him, and so he wandered the earth.

It was now firm in his mind that the Stranger had been none other than Christ come back to earth again and that he, Julius Kugler, had betrayed and killed Him.

Eventually he found his way back to Osterhausen and one morning in the chamber behind the altar they found him, an old, half-witted creature, kneeling before the figure of the Christ, hands clasped, trailing behind him still his worthless bag of money.

He made confession of his crime and died.

They looked down at him where he lay.

"Why," said one of them, "here is our Judas ready made."

With grim justice they took him as he was into one of the caves where they quarried the rock. Against the rock face at this point was a patch that was always wet and the water ran down in steady drip upon drip to a pool below. They placed the body of Julius so that the water trickled down upon him, and its peculiar properties first petrified the sinful flesh and then coated it over in stone.

"He fled," said Enger, "a man of flesh and blood with a heart of stone; he was received back a thing of stone with a human heart broken by contrition; and there he kneels for grace for ever."

"A strange story," I said.

Enger rose as if it was not yet finished.

"Come back with me," he said, and again I followed the bending flame of the torch to where that silent company sat.

He took me to the back of the table and to where the figure of the Christ sat.

"A few years ago," he said, "we found a crack here at the back of this figure. It was not solid as we had supposed. Carefully, a panel was cut away to permit investigation. We found the figure to be empty inside."

"It may have been some chance wayfarer he killed," I said, my mind still obstinately struggling for explanations.

"You have not followed me," said the Pastor. "I said this figure was *empty;* there was no skeleton—nothing. Just space."

END

Teens And Toddlers (*Continued from page* 50)

Teen-ager's Sweater (*Continued*)

8th row.—P. 2M., * 4C., 1M., (2C., 1M.) twice, 4C., 1M. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

9th row.—K. 2M., * 1M., 1C., 2M., 1C., 3M., 1C., 3M., 1C., 2M., 1 C., rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

10th row.—P. 1M., 1C., * 4M., 3C., 1M., 3C., 4M., 1C. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2M.

11th row.—K. 2M., * 1C., 3M. ; rep. from * to last 2 sts., 2C.

12th to 21st rows.—Rep. the 10th, 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th, 4th., 3rd, 2nd. and 1st rows in that order. Break off C. wool.

Next row.—P.**

Now work in the k. 2, p. 1, rib (right side), casting off 50 sts. at the beg. of the next 2 rows, then divide for the back opening.

Next row.—Cast on 9 sts., rib 57 sts., then, taking a new ball of wool, work in rib to end.

Next row.—Cast on 9 sts., rib 57 sts. Work across remaining sts. in rib with the other ball of wool.

Continue to work each side separately but, at the same time, casting on at the outer edges (6) sts. at beg. of next 6 rows, (4) sts beg of next 6 rows, (3) sts. beg. of next 6 rows ; then dec. 1 st. at both ends of the next row (outer edges) and every following 6th row until 92 sts. remain each side of the back opening. Then cast off 3 sts. both ends of the needle every alternate row until 35 sts. remain at each side of opening. Then cast off 2 sts. both ends of the next 4 alternate rows, then dec. 1 st. both ends of the next 3 alternate rows. Cast off ribways the remaining sts. loosely.

FRONT

Work as given for the back from ** to **, then work in rib as for back yoke—casting off 50 sts. at the beg. of the next 2 rows, then cast on 6 sts. at beg. of next 8 rows, 4 sts. at beg. of next 10 rows, then 2 sts. at beg. of next 6 rows. Now cast off 2 sts. at beg. of next 6 rows, 3 sts. at beg. of next 10 rows, 4 sts. at beg. of next 12 rows, 3 sts. at beg. of next 10 rows. 2 sts. at beg. of next 6 rows (64 sts.).

SHAPE FOR NECK

Next row.—Rib 22 sts., cast off 20 sts., rib to end.

Continue on the last set of sts. Casting off at neck edge on each alternate row : 4 sts., twice ; 3 sts., twice ; then 2 sts. until all sts. are cast off. Rejoin wool to other set of sts. and shape to match the first side.

SLEEVES

With No. 13 needles cast on 66 sts. Work in rib as given for the back for 3 ins. Change to No. 11 needles, continue in st.st., inc. 1 st. at both ends of every following 6th row until 104 sts. Continue without shaping until sleeve measures 16½ ins. Cast off.

TO COMPLETE GARMENT

Press the work on the wrong side under a damp cloth with a hot iron, avoiding all ribbing. Join the ribbed yoke cast-on sts. edge to the cast-off sts. edge of bodice. Join the shoulder seams. Set in the sleeves. Join the sleeve and side seams. Turn in neck edge about ½ in., and lightly sew on the wrong side. Sew in zip fastener at back.

END

The Bolero (*Continued*)

to form picot edge.

Next row.—Inc. in every alternate st. (54 sts.). Now work patt. as given for back of waistcoat, inc. 1 st. at end of 1st row. Continue until work measures 2½ ins. from beg.

Cast off 3 sts. beg. next 2 rows, then dec. 1 st. at beg. of every row until 30 sts. remain. Cast off 4 sts., beg. next 6 rows. Cast off.

TO MAKE UP

Press lightly. Join shoulder seams. Set in sleeves, seam sleeve and side seams. With right side of work facing and circular needle, pick up and knit 292 sts. from all round lower edge, fronts and back of neck. Work 2 rounds plain knitting.

Next round.—* M. 1, k. 2 tog. ; rep. from * to end of round. Work 2 more rounds in plain knitting. Cast off. Fold at row of holes and hem neatly on wrong side. Work embroidery as waistcoat.

THE WAISTCOAT

BACK

With No. 8 needles cast on 63 sts.

1st row.—* K. 1, p. 1 ; rep. from * to end of row.

2nd row.—P.

3rd row.—* K. 7, p. 1 ; rep. from * to last 7 sts., k. 7.

4th row.—P. Rep. 3rd and 4th rows 3 times more. These 10 rows form 1 pattern; rep. them until work measures 7 ins.

ARMHOLE

Cast off 3 sts. beg. next 2 rows. Then dec. at each end of every row until 51 sts. remain. When work measures 11½ ins. from beg., shape shoulder by casting off 8 sts. at beg. of next 4 rows. Cast off.

POCKETS

Cast on 16 sts. and work 17 rows in st.st. ; leave on st. holder until required.

RIGHT FRONT

Cast on 1 st.

1st row.—Inc. in st.

2nd row.—Inc. in 1st st., p. 1.

3rd row.—Inc. in each of 1st 2 sts., p. 1.

4th row.—Inc. in 1st st., p. to end.

5th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. to last st. ; inc. in last st.

6th row.—As 4th row.

7th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 5, p. 1, k. 1 ; inc. in last st.

8th row.—As 4th row.

9th row.—Inc. in 1st st. * P. 1, k. 1 ; rep. from * to last st., inc.

10th row.—As 4th row.

11th row.—Inc. in 1st st. * K. 7, p. 1 ; rep. from * to last st., inc.

12th row.—As 4th row.

13th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 1, p. 1, k. 7, p. 1, k. 7, p. 1, k. 1 ; inc. in last st.

14th row.—As 4th row.

15th row.—K. 3. * P. 1, k. 7 ; rep. from * to last 5 sts. P. 1, k. 4 ; cast on 11 sts.

16th row.—P. Keeping continuity of patt., work 2½ ins. without shaping, ending with a p. row. Now work pocket as follows : Work 7 sts. Cast off 16 sts. Work to end.

Next row.—P. 12 ; slip pocket sts. on left hand needle, p. these, p. to end of row. Continue in patt. until work measures as back to armhole, ending with a row on right side.

ARMHOLES

Cast off 3 sts. at beg. of next row ; p. to last 2 sts. P. 2 tog. Work back. Now dec. at armhole edge for next 3 rows, at same time dec. at front edge on every 3rd row until 16 sts. remain. Work straight until front measures as back. Cast off 8 sts. at beg. of next 2 rows commencing armhole edge.

LEFT FRONT

Cast on 1 st.

1st row.—Inc. in st.

2nd row.—Inc. in 1st st. P. 1.

3rd row.—Inc. in each of 1st 2 sts., k. 1.

4th row.—P. to last st., inc.

5th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. to last st., inc.

6th row.—As 4th.

7th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 1, p. 1, k. 5 inc. in last st.

8th row.—As 4th row.

9th row.—Inc. in 1st st. * K. 1, p. 1 ; rep. from * to last st., inc.

10th row.—As 4th row.

11th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 5, p. 1, k. 7, inc. in last st.

12th row.—As 4th row.

13th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 7, p. 1, k. 7, p. 1, inc. in last st.

14th row.—As 4th row.

15th row.—Inc. in 1st st. K. 1, p. 1, k. 7 p. 1, k. 7, p. 1, k. 2, inc. in last st.

16th row.—As 4th row.

17th row.—Work in patt.

18th row.—P. to end; cast on 11 sts. Keeping continuity of patt. work for 2½ ins. Work 12 sts., cast off 16 sts., work to end of row. P. 7 slip pocket sts. on left hand needle, p. these, p. to end of row. Complete as right front with reverse shapings.

TO MAKE UP

Join shoulder seams. With 6 strands of wool plait a length long enough to go round each armhole. Stitch neatly on extreme edge. Join side seams and stitch a further plait all round lower and front edges of waistcoat, also along top of pockets. Make 4 loops in buttonhole stitch on right front and sew on buttons. Make flowers by working back stitch in one corner of alt. squares to form triangle, leaving long loops which are afterwards cut and fluffed with point of needle. Work stalk in stem-st. and leaves in lazy daisy st.

END

Acrobats Abounding!

(*Continued from page 37*)

The actual Christmas programme is not fixed until a few weeks before the season starts. Contracts are only signed after delicate negotiations in which both artiste (never artist without the "e"!) and management know the exact psychological moment at which to stop bargaining and clinch the deal. The circus complement finally assembles only a few days before the First Night—and those few days are frantic.

Behind the scenes, work has, of course, been going on for weeks. At Olympia, for instance, Mrs. Wilmer, who has been wardrobe mistress with the circus for twenty-one years, measured (yes, measured) the elephants in October for their new costumes. She likes variety and often put aside the half-finished elephants' rig-out to work on the immaculate new tails for the slim ringmaster. Later, when the season is in full swing, Mrs. Wilmer will not be able to indulge in such whims—she will take strictly in rotation all the acrobats' split trousers, the girls' torn skirts and the monkeys' chewed jackets. Most artistes have between six and twelve changes of costume for the season—and that goes for the animal performers, too!

A circus, like an army, marches on its stomach. This year, the animal catering officers (that is what they are called) feel about as happy as Mrs. Dale must have felt when tea-rationing ended: bran and oats are at last off the ration. But even now, catering arrangements are by no means easy and supplies have to be secured well in advance. A typical weekly order includes half a ton of carrots for six elephants, 7 cwt. of horseflesh and twenty quarts of milk (who would have thought it!) for ten tigers, 4½ tons of hay and clover mixture for fifty horses—and as many apples, nuts and pears for the monkeys as available—and as this giant housekeeping budget can stand! To complicate matters, even animals' palates vary according to the cuisine they are accustomed to.

French horses are fussy about the kind of hay-and-clover mixture they get, and Swiss-trained tigers are thought to consider our rather watery milk an insult after the creamy Swiss product. What is worse—circus animals can't be *made* to eat what they don't like—their whims have to be taken into account just like any other prima donna's.

Today as much as ever there are circus dynasties. The Mills, Stevensons, Tom Arnold's Schumans have been in the business for generations. New generations of a dynasty are readily accepted into the fraternity—but gatecrashers from outside are often viewed with suspicion. These daring young things on the flying trapeze have a hard road before them and they'll have to face far greater problems than their colleagues' initial hostility, so the dynastic "closed shop" attitude worries no one much.

Circus life has romance and glamour all right—but there is also another side to it: putting it bluntly, most artistes are "very poor insurance risks."

END

Whose Christmas *Is* It?

(*Continued from page 31*)

I have two boys aged six and a half and three and a half. The youngest already seems to be nudging reason's shoulder since the other day we were late for a tea party, and the bus wouldn't come and he said: "Daddy, take a taxi—that's *fast*." I told him I hadn't enough money and he replied: "Daddy can get money from the bank." I only wish my bank manager were as reasonable as that.

I think my plan works with children of three and upwards. It is simply to cut up the Christmas period into Children's Time and Grown-ups' Time. And it is here that the reason part of it comes in. If the children are told that, for example, Christmas morning and Christmas dinner are theirs, but that from bedtime (not too long after the usual hour) the day is for the grown-ups, then one is a long way towards getting the best of two worlds. But strict fairness is absolutely essential.

If Mother and Father had a late Christmas Eve party, the impact of Christmas morning (ours starts about 6 a.m.) can be an irritable burden. It is *not* fair to want to sleep late on that morning of all others. Father, at whatever cost, must be affable when the youngest bounces in with a Sten gun to shoot with unreasonable venom till breakfast-time.

If one explains to the children that they are *not* to descend on you after bedtime, they will mostly accept this as a fair bargain They'll try it, of course—but if *you* have kept your bargain, there is every chance they will keep theirs.

Our plan for Christmas has worked well before and it will do so again, but there is more in it than a division of Children's Time and Grown-ups' Time. Father is heavily involved. Every Christmas he must be char, nurse, second cook and pacifier-in-chief. I pacify my wife who has more to do than she can really cope with. I pacify the youngest who yearns achingly for the exclusive use of the eldest boy's new toys. I pacify aunts who consider I am not *firm* enough with the children. I pacify myself (secretly) with the Christmas stock in the cupboard under the stairs.

I also see to it that my wife gets at least two breakfasts in bed. We three men have a crumbly, marmalade-out-of-the-tin, unsupervised breakfast in the kitchen.

These things I do, not to store up treasures in heaven (journalists never get there) but because I like my wife to look attractive and, when we go out, to be quietly groomed, serene and lovely to look at. It is purely selfish. Christmas is never Christmas if at the end of it all one's wife is exhausted, flops palely on the sofa sighing: "Thank goo-ness, that's over again."

END

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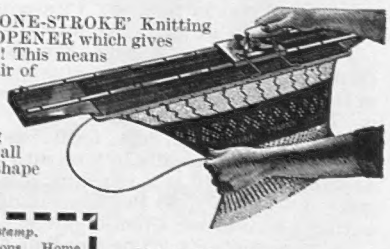

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Talking Of Books (*Continued from page 40*)

crafts, fiestas, castanet dancing in an ardent, exclamatory style, illustrating with her own rare photographs; but she doesn't convince me that gnawing raw veg on the road is better than eating at civilized tables.

Vena and Bradford Angier, tiring of life in Boston (U.S.A.), migrated to the lonely Peace River country in northern British Columbia to experiment with the Thoreau simple life in a log cabin. They appear not to mind the intense cold, the dearth of near neighbours, the wolves and bears. They get plenty of game-hunting, and have bought land and settled. **"At Home In The Woods"** (Hale, 18s.) records simply their day-to-day pioneering life.

Jacques Chegaray prefers the Tahiti sun, on journeys among the islands making a documentary film. He finds them enchanting to visit, but doesn't pretend one should live there. It is impossible, he says, to lead an ordinary family existence. Everything, including alcohol, opium, is far too easy and abundant. The days pass in an atmosphere of gaiety, optimism; there are no rules. Energy is sapped; the most solid character disintegrates, with few exceptions—as Gauguin found. One needs this warning, since **"My Polynesia"** (Barker, 15s.) allows ample scope for the charm and romance, and the saronged girls in the photographs look perilously alluring!

No Christmas list would be complete without a biography or two. We have long assumed that all was not always well with the marriage of Edward VII and the lovely Alexandra. E. E. P. Tisdall's **"Unpredictable Queen"** (Stanley Paul, 16s.) cites two occasions on which she virtually cleared out: when she felt hurt, humiliated, by his being subpoenaed in Lord Mordaunt's divorce petition, and after the Tranby Croft card-cheating libel suit. Other intimate disclosures make this an appreciable gift for the lover of royal memoirs.

Philip Lindsay makes no claim to original research in his portrait of Edgar Allan Poe, **"The Haunted Man"** (Hutchinson, 16s.). His aim is to show him as "a tortured great man who found the fever called living too crushing for his weak will." He does it graphically in this poignant story of Poe's decline through frustrating loves, drink, drugs, perversion, necrophilia, delusions, until *The Raven* became the symbol of his own dark soul.

Bargain reprint of Godfrey Winn's story of convoy ship on Russian run: **"P.Q.17"** (Hutchinson, 7s. 6d.).

Choice of a novel should not be difficult, once you know what *type* will suit: adventure, romance, character, humour or psychological subtlety. Gerald Hanley's **"The Year Of The Lion"** (Collins, 10s. 6d.) is a young man's adventure in East Africa—with lions and more than one lady. The pace is brisk, the life of white settlers amusingly and vividly portrayed.

Jean Giorno's **"The Hussar On The Roof"** (Museum Press, 15s.), translated from the French by Jonathan Griffin, is another young man's adventures—with a young marquise whom he finds in an abandoned house—in the Provence 1838 cholera epidemic. He communicates the heat of that pestilential summer as Virginia Woolf does the cold of the Great Frost in *Orlando*. Picaresque, and a little mad in its narrative intensity.

Pearl S. Buck's **"Come, My Beloved"** (Methuen, 12s. 6d.) is the spiritual adventure of three generations of a rich American family in India. More and more they become absorbed in Hindu life, until the granddaughter falls tragically in love with a young Indian. This idyll is a touching climax to a story written with all the understanding the author put into her Chinese novels.

In Paul Gallico's **"The Foolish Immortals"** (Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d.) a U.S. charlatan exploits a rich woman's craving for Scriptural longevity and takes her to the Holy Land to acquire its secret from an obscure sect. The adventure here is in the unforseen complications that ensue, affecting others in the party as well. An unusual story, touched with religious sentiment.

The young poet Chatterton's life was an adventure in Bristol and London, with poverty, squalor, and the urge for fame that made him forge the "Rowley poems." In the end he was racked by a sordid disease, concluded "I am but able to see perfection without the faculty of attaining it," and poisoned himself. Rayne Kruger's **"Young Villain With Wings"** (Longmans, Green, 12s. 6d.) novelizes Chatterton with penetrating sympathy and a sure grasp of period background.

A story of character and romance—Jacobine Hichens's **"Touch And Go"** (Putnam, 12s. 6d.)—concerns the relations of a charming young writer of the non-marrying sort with two women: a Roman contessa easy on the eye and morals, and an A.T.S. officer of strict Presbyterian upbringing. A third, the amusing Emma, enters the lists, but she has saving humour of the kind which can say: "So long as the chaps go on buzzing merrily around, that's the thing. The moment nobody loves me any more, I shall be in the gas oven." Real, human people make this a good tale of love's cross-purposes.

The problem of two women, one man, is also posed in Naomi Royde Smith's **"She Always Caught The Post"** (Hale, 9s. 6d.). Here the background is mainly the sophisticated one of woman columnist with secretary and important social contacts, and a quiet country cousin's reactions to it. A study of love-values done with psychological finesse, in quiet, casual style.

A love between parents so exclusive that it isolates the children—and incidentally leads to a gas-oven death-pact—is the theme of Lavender Lloyd's **"Your Father And I"** (Eyre & Spottiswoode, 10s. 6d.). Particularly one is shown the effect on the frustrated, guarded Elizabeth when love enters her life. This is a first novel distinctive in the telling, marred by an unnecessarily far-fetched revolver episode at the end in which one cannot believe.

Isobel Strachey's **"Quick Bright Things"** (Cape, 10s. 6d.) are also Bright Young People in a way, since they rotate round a Regency house off Knightsbridge and mostly take divorce or separation in their stride. The chief characters in this light, heady comedy are a man-hunting mother and daughter surrounded by amusing talk and situations, solely for our entertainment.

A good open-spaces story of U.S. country-house life, of special appeal to lovers of dogs and horses: Walter D. Edmond's **"The Boyds Of Black River"** (Collins, 12s. 6d.).

THE following are some non-fiction books for Christmas reading:

"Weald Of Kent And Sussex," by Sheila Kaye-Smith (Robert Hale, 18s.). **"When I Was In Patagonia,"** by Commander A. B. Campbell (Christopher Johnson, 12s. 6d.). **"Into Hidden Burma,"** by Maurice Collis (Faber & Faber, 18s.). **"Winds Of Adventure,"** by Hans de Meiss Teuffen with Victor Rosen (Museum Press, 16s.). **"North-West Europe 1944-45,"** by John North (Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 10s. 6d.). **"Country Folk,"** Norman Wymer (Odhams Press, 15s.). **"Hunting Scenes From Surtees,"** selected by Lionel Gough (Hart-Davis, 12s. 6d.). **"The Pilgrim's Progress,"** by John Bunyan, illustrations by Ardizzone (Faber & Faber, 15s.). **"Boldness Be My Friend,"** by Richard Pape (Elek, 16s.). **"Night Has A Thousand Eyes,"** by Helen Astrup and B. L. Jacot (Macdonald, 12s. 6d.).

Recommended fiction includes:

"13 White Tulips," by Frances Crane (Hammond & Hammond, 9s. 6d.). **"This Way For A Shroud,"** by James Hadley Chase (Robert Hale, 10s. 6d.). **"China Station,"** by Donald R. Morris (Hammond & Hammond, 10s. 6d.). **"The Happiest Hour,"** by Stewart Hunter (Collins, 10s. 6d.). **"Proceed To Judgment,"** by Ingeborg Guadagna (Robert Hale, 9s. 6d.). **"The Big Chariot,"** by Charmian Clift and George Johnston (Faber & Faber, 12s. 6d.). **"The Charioteer,"** by Mary Renault (Longmans, 15s.). **"The Holiday,"** by Constantine Fitz Gibbon (Cassell, 7s. 6d.). **"The Tudor Rose,"** by Margaret Campbell Barnes (Macdonald, 12s. 6d.).

For the children there is a wide selection of books to choose from.

For the very small, four to seven years, are these books published by the Brockhampton Press:

"Muffin On Holiday," by Neville Main (1s.). **"Clicky The Clockwork Clown,"** by Enid Blyton (1s.). **"Fun With Honk,"** by Joy K. Seddon (1s.). **"Jimmy At The Zoo,"** by Neville Main (1s.). **"Your Friend The Dog,"** by Nina Scott Langley (2s.). **"Andy Pandy's Washing Day,"** by Maria Bird (1s. 6d). **"Andy Pandy And The Ginger Bread Man,"** by Maria Bird (1s. 6d.). **"The Birthday Picnic,"** by Jane Pilgrim (1s. 6d.). **"Naughty George,"** by Jane Pilgrim (1s. 6d.). **"Mrs. Squirrel And Hazel,"** by Jane Pilgrim (1s. 6d.). **"Andy Pandy And His Hobby Horse,"** by Maria Bird (1s. 6d.). **"Walt Disney's Peter Pan,"** retold by Alison Winn (1s. 6d.).

Also for young children:

"The Little Painted Train," by Mary Winser (Publicity Products, 1s. 6d.). **"The Five Brown Bears,"** by Moyra Leatham (Publicity Products, 1s. 6d.). **"Babar The King,"** by Jean de Brunhoff (Methuen, 6s.). **"Babar's Travels,"** by Jean de Brunhoff (Methuen, 6s.). **"Moomin, Mymble And Little My,"** by Tove Jansson (Ernest Benn, 8s. 6d.). **"Winnie-the-Pooh And The Bees,"** by A. A. Milne (Methuen, 6s.). **"Winnie-the-Pooh And Eeyore's Tail,"** by A. A. Milne (Methuen, 6s.).

For the older child:

"The Golden Book Of Bible Stories," (Publicity Products, 10s. 6d.). **"Buffalo Bill Wild West Annual No. 5,"** (Boardman, 7s. 6d.). **"The Comet,"** the story of the aeroplane with a model to make yourself (Brockhampton Press, 4s.). **"Colonel Crock,"** Annette Mills (Harrap, 5s.)

And for ten to twelve year olds:

"Stars Over Bethlehem," Opal Wheeler (Harrap, 6s.). **"Chowry,"** Jean Forbes-Robertson (MacGibbon & Kee, 8s. 6d.). **"The Fearless Treasure,"** Noel Streatfeild (Michael Joseph, 12s. 6d.). **"The San Sebastian,"** Eilis Dillon (Faber & Faber, 10s. 6d.). **"The Story Of Jasper The TV Pup,"** Macdonald Daly (W. H. Allen, 7s. 6d.). **"Girl's Book Of Ballet,"** edited by A. H. Franks (Burke, 12s. 6d.).

END

Christmas—1853

(*Continued from page 44*)

compassion reached out even to the paupers. At Christmas, 1853, in scores of London workhouses, 100,000 needy and destitute inmates were regaled with roast beef, potatoes, bread, porter and plum pudding.

In every picture of the early Victorian Christmas, whether in the vein of charity or genial family merrymaking, seems to lurk the spirit of the greatest of all Christmas spell-binders, Charles Dickens. How fitting that Dickens, at that Christmastide of 1853, was acting so much in character!

For there he was, in Birmingham Town Hall, in "a red pulpit, like a Punch and Judy stand without the top," reading to entranced audiences *A Christmas Carol* and *The Cricket On The Hearth*.

Dickens and Christmas—comfortably the words go together, suggesting snowy stage-coach tales of old-fashioned, pre-Victorian, Pickwickian Yuletides.

With the stage-coach days behind it and the mechanized modern age still before it, Christmas 100 years ago was Christmas at the cross-roads. Steeped in the old ways but seasoned with a dash of the new, it was racy, convivial and kindly.

1.12.53

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FOR HIM Decorated gift boxes containing his favourite toilet luxuries, shaving requisites, brilliantines, etc.

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